Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-94-172 *6 September 1994*

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Butrus-Ghali: U.S. May Invade Haiti 'At Any Time'

AU0209161394 Paris AFP in English 1553 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] United Nations, Sept 2 (AFP)—The United States has the right to intervene militarily in Haiti at any time, without issuing an ultimatum, to oust the ruling junta, UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali said Friday [2 Sep].

In an interview with AFP, Butrus-Ghali said the UN mandate on Haiti allows U.S. officials to launch an invasion "when they want."

Butrus-Ghali said that the UN role in Haiti is on hold for now "unless there is a new resolution."

"The United Nations has given a mandate to a group of states to act and it is up to them to decide," the UN chief said.

Suggestions of a possible U.S. invasion of Haiti have increased after the failure of a UN mission last month aimed at mediation. Several UN resolutions have urged the military to step aside and allow the restoration of democratic rule, and the latest authorizes a U.S.-led force to remove the junta.

The army toppled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide in September 1991.

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said Thursday that U.S. troops would be sent to Haiti even if the transition is peaceful to form a large part of an international force protecting Aristide and the restored government.

Once order has been restored, a UN-led multinational force would replace the initial invasion force.

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PARLATINO Rejects Blockade of Cuba, Use of Force in Haiti

PA0209154794 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2333 GMT 31 Aug 94

[Text] Caracas, 31 Aug (NOTIMEX)—The Latin American Parliament [PARLATINO] rejected measures that imply the use of force in nations experiencing internal conflicts, Venezuelan Deputy Humberto Celli, president of that organization, said today.

Referring to the Cuban and Haitian cases, Celli said the Parliament's position is to seek peaceful solutions that guarantee the right to exercise personal freedom by the inhabitants of those nations.

As for Cuba, PARLATINO spoke out last week in favor of the end of the U.S. blockade and of the Caribbean island's integration into international organizations.

On 31 January 1962, a majority of Latin American nations responded to U.S. pressure by excluding Cuba from participation in the OAS. Mexico, however, refused to break diplomatic relations with the island.

Regarding Haiti, Celli reported that the regional organization proposed to the United Nations the establishment of a conciliatory board that would keep peace until free elections are held.

For this, he explained, an agreement would have to be reached in which ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide would forgo his mandate, the military would withdraw, and a group would be created to act as a peace facilitator.

Although the proposal was sent to OAS Secretary General Joao Baena Soares and UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, no response has been received yet, Celli noted.

The deputy indicated that one of PARLATINO's priorities is to find feasible solutions within the state of severe poverty in Latin American and Caribbean nations.

"It is not enough to achieve and maintain political democracy. We must construct in our nations and our region a democratic economic model that reduces the extreme imbalances in the distribution of income," he concluded.

PARLATINO, currently comprised of 22 member nations, was created in 1964. Among its main goals is the defense of democracy, regional integration, and avoiding the use of force as a coercive measure.

Presidents Menem, Wasmosy Inaugurate Yacyreta Power Plant

PY0209191094 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 2 Sep 94 p 2

[Text] The presidents of Paraguay and Argentina, Juan Carlos Wasmosy and Carlos Menem, respectively, this morning officially inaugurated the Yacyreta Hydroelectric Power Plant, which started the stage of commercial operation in a climate of unsolved labor problems. Important international personalities participated in the event.

Attending the ceremonies were former U.S. President George Bush, IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus, and Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle Herrera. The heated climate, obvious in the days preceding the official action, created tensions due to possible demonstrations during the inauguration, which was attended by nearly 2,500 persons, including high-ranking delegations from Argentina, Paraguay, and other countries.

Last minute negotiations between EBY [Yacyreta Binational Entity] officials and workers lessened the risk of frictions and the official inauguration proceeded in a climate of tense calm.

The official acts started at 1030 with the meeting of Presidents Wasmosy and Menem on the spillway, near the bridge's head, the highest area of the dam and the point marking the border between Paraguay and Argentina.

The presidents then moved to the engine house, where they officially inaugurated the dam project in an impressive act following the appropriate protocol. The plant thus started to produce at 3 percent of installed capacity after a 13-year delay. The energy will be sold to Argentina as of today.

Eviction of Workers

EBY workers practically laid siege to the plant for more than 48 hours demanding the payment of a $1,000 bonus per capita for 10 years of uninterrupted labor. They were peacefully evicted last night in order to guarantee the effective and peaceful development of the official acts today.

A considerable number of workers and their families, however, gathered this morning on the Ana Cua bridge that permits access to the work zone for an eventual attempt to blockade the entry of special guests.

Reaction to FAA Air Travel Restrictions

PA0509215194 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1808 GMT 5 Sep 94

[By Edelmiro Franco]

[Text] San Salvador, 5 Sep (NOTIMEX)—While some Central American governments are protesting over the restrictions imposed by the United States on air travel from other countries to and from the United States, other countries are adopting control measures and updating their regulations.

Last Friday, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a list of nine countries to which it was canceling flight licenses to and from U.S. territory.

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The penalized countries are: Honduras, Nicaragua, Belize, Dominican Republic, The Gambia, Ghana, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Zaire. Washington is maintaining permits to some countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Bolivia, and the Netherland Antilles provided they improve—within a short period of time—their respective controls and safety measures.

After learning of the FAA decision, the Nicaraguan Government sent a protest note to Washington saying that the measure was adopted in a unilateral manner, according to Raul Leclair, deputy construction and transportation minister.

Nonetheless, Alejandro Arguello, former director of Civil Aviation in Nicaragua, said that several recommendations made in 1990 by the International Civil Aviation Organization (OACI) were not carried out for lack of resources. The Nicaraguan Aviation Company (NICA) also protested the FAA decision and announced it would continue flying to the United States because the provisional permit it has is still valid for 1 more year.

Meanwhile, Guillermo Chirinos, director of Civil Aviation in Honduras, said that the FAA measure does not have any effect on his country, because no Honduran airlines are making any international flights at this time.

Likewise, Julio Godoy, deputy director of Guatemalan Civil Aviation, questioned the FAA report and said that Aviateca, the Guatemalan airline, is complying with all rules of national and international safety.

As for El Salvador, Transportation Deputy Minister Rafael Alfaro emphasized that the government of President Armando Calderon Sol has launched a "policy to update safety measures." The official announced that an FAA commission will arrive in El Salvador next Wednesday to evaluate the aviation safety measures being applied in this country. He said that a second mission of experts will arrive on 20 September to help the local authorities prepare a manual on airlines maintenance. In additon, he said that the measure does not affect the Salvadoran airline, Central American Air Transportation (TACA), the largest one in the region.

A TACA communique issued recently points out that the company has implemented all security requirements demanded by the U.S. Department of Transporation.

The Salvadoran airline stated that all company aircraft operate under U.S. registration and that crew members carry licenses certified by all international civilian airlines organizations.

TACA Marketing Director Mauricio Sol explained that the measure adopted by the FAA is aimed more at the respective countries than at the airlines in particular, even though these are affected by the decision.

Meanwhile, a bulletin signed by the Costa Rican Airlines, Inc. [LACSA], as well as by NICA and Aviateca, stresses that this "group of airlines complies with regulations established by the local Central American authorities."

It states that the airlines also complies with regulations "required by the main governing organization" of the United States.

"We operate modern aicraft registered in the United States, and as such, are subject to strict controls required by the manufacturers, as well as by the regulating bodies," the document reiterates.

It adds that "Our customers can be sure that the security procedures and guidelines are at the same level as U.S. airlines. Flights are taking place normally and uninterrupted."

For the first time in the history of civil aeronautics, a list of countries penalized because of poor safety measures is being made public. According to the Salvadoran Transportation Department, the measure responds to demands by private consumer groups.

The FAA began to control safety measures after a Colombian aircraft crashed in New York in 1990 as a result of insufficient fuel, an accident that caused the death of more than 70 passengers.

According to a Transportation Department report, there are currently 470 airlines from 90 countries licensed to travel to and from the U.S. territory.

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Cuba

Ministry Reports 'Tragic' Incidents at Guantanamo

FL0209124594 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 2 Sep 94

[From the "First Thing" program]

[Text] The following information from the Ministry of Foreign Relations appeared in the newspaper GRANMA, on page two:

On 31 August and 1 September, tragic and dangerous incidents took place in the perimeter that separates the portion illegally occupied by the United States at Guantanamo Bay and the free territory.

On 31 August, a group of 24 citizens trying to emigrate to the United States through the Naval Base of Guantanamo by sea landed on the west side of the perimeter at 1310, 150 meters from the U.S. base but still in Cuban territory. For several minutes they walked toward the fence of the U.S. base. At 1320 the soldiers at post 44 of that installation instructed those citizens that they had to turn back through the mine field. As a consequence of this, at 1330 approximately 200 meters from the perimeter, one of the citizens stepped on a mine causing injuries to two or three people, from what was seen at the Cuban observation post. After this they returned to post No. 44 of the base where they were received under these circumstances.

It seems that the personnel trying to emigrate thought they had reached the occupied territory and under those conditions the U.S. post should have sought another solution instead of ordering their return by land in a zone that is filled by mine fields. The subsequent reception of these people and the aid given to those injured were correct actions.

On 1 September, two of the citizens confined at one of the concentration camps for Cubans at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo, decided to return to Cuban territory by land. They were able to escape at night through the border perimeter of the east side in the zone of U.S. Post No. 1, which was not being guarded at the time. Because of this irresponsible action they found themselves inside the mine fields from where they began to call for help. They were warned not to move and in the morning, at 0740, in a humanitarian gesture, they were rescued by combatants of the border brigade, who risked their own lives in the effort.

These irresponsible actions, in addition to endangering the lives of those who try to cross the perimeter and those who try to rescue them, can bring about other tragic incidents since vast numbers of troops have been deployed to that area, which has vast mine fields and other defensive systems. People have been warned repeatedly, and are warned once again, that it is completely impossible to transit in any direction by land through the perimeter of that base.

Ministry Spokesman on Guantanamo Base Refugees, Haiti

PA0309030494 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Report by Barbara Betancourt from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] During his regular news conference with the national and international press, Cuban Foreign Ministry spokesman Miguel Alfonso commented on the situation confronted by the illegal emigrants currently confined at the Guantanamo Naval Base—a base occupied by the United States against the will of the Cuban people.

[Begin Alfonso recording] Well, all those who are there were not forced by anyone to leave. They were forced to leave because of the economic situation, as well as because of the relentless propaganda that has been disseminated the past 25 years by people who are outside Cuba. If they are there, they are there of their own free will, and that is the situation they are confronting at this time.

It is difficult to anticipate what is going to happen to them. I believe that [words indistinct]. The situation at Guantanamo is also quite unpredictable. In other words, it is place that is geographically limited. It is a place [words indistinct], and as you all know, relatives of U.S. personnel stationed there have already been evacuated because they believe that [word indistinct].

We have already seen in recent years what the concentration of Cubans can cause. The only new element being utilized at this time by the United States are contacts being made with various nations throughout the region to try to relocate that time bomb in other countries. At any rate, it is the U.S. authority's problem, because they decided to send them there. They could have [words indistinct].

According to figures released by international news agencies, to build adequate installations to house nearly 10,000 refugees it should cost approximately $100 million, in addition to $20 million just to feed them during [words indistinct]. These figures could easily increase. That is a problem the United States will have to face, because it was the one that decided to send them, not the Cuban Government, and because that [words indistinct] Guantanamo base. [end recording]

When asked his opinion with respect to the fate of the illegal Cubans who now want to leave the base at Guantanamo and return to national territory, Miguel Alfonso gave the following answer:

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[Begin Alfonso recording] I have received information indicating that this is one of the issues the U.S. delegation will probably present to the Cuban delegation during the talks that are scheduled to begin today. I repeat, I am not aware of any isolated reaction with respect to this specific issue. Evidently, this is a point included in the immigration issue the United States wants to discuss. I know of no reaction by the Cuban Government with respect to this issue. [end recording]

The so-called Cuban rafters are not the only occupants of the illegal Guantanamo base. For some time now, Haitian refugees who were never allowed to reach U.S. territory have also been confined there. However, this is not the only situation that involves Cubans and Haitians, because preparations to invade Haiti also affect Cuba.

[Begin Alfonso recording] It is evident that any display of military force in the region represents a risks to the region's peace and security. In other words, it is evident that independent of any position, in principle, that Cuba has held to [word indistinct] of the Haitian military, and as we have expressed not only in words, but also in deeds, in support of President Aristide, the methods announced by the UN Security Council constitute, according to Cuba, a mistaken path to restore legality in Haiti. These measure are evidently more [words indistinct] in a region which is not necessarily the most peaceful. Most naturally, none of this contributes to a climate of peace in the area. [end recording]

Rafters Using Havana's Malecon To Depart for U.S.

PA0509192094 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1732 GMT 5 Sep 94

[By Francisco Ramirez]

[Text] Havana, 5 Sep (NOTIMEX)—The chaotic exodus of Cubans aboard makeshift rafts is taking place from a new starting point on this capital's central Malecon Avenue, which runs along the shore. From here, would-be emigrants are taking to the sea as hundreds of onlookers watch.

Sunday, a crowd shouted "Let them jump! Let them jump!" to dozens of young shirtless people wearing hats made of palm-tree leaves and who pushed a raft along the Prado and La Punta intersection near Havana Bay. This phrase, which is contrary to the catchphrase of the pro-government people ("Let them get out of here! Let them get out of here!") was a call for more people without documents to leave the island. These shouts were heard, ironically, at the site of the largest altercation between policemen, government supporters, and antigovernment protesters to rock this capital in 35 years, which took place on 5 August. That incident, which left dozens people injured and arrested, took place following several hijackings of vessels from the port of Havana. The current exodus, the largest since 1980, began as a result of this.

On the Malecon, the former site of Havana carnivals, sailors-to-be pulled a cart loaded with logs, tires, and canvas, but they nearly lost control of their vehicle when they reached the seawall.

About 150 people who were in the area shouting and running in all directions, including women holding small children, contributed to the pandemonium and created a chaotic traffic jam at the intersection where vehicles turn to go to the bay tunnel or to the Old City.

The vehicle in which one foreign correspondent was traveling was almost hit by the ungainly raft while the rafters demanded that drivers and people on bicycles make room for them as they headed toward the shore.

One of the rafters told NOTIMEX: "We have to hurry before they close the doors again," referring to the possible outcome of the immigration talks taking place in New York between Washington and Havana.

On 12 August, after accusing the United States of spending years encouraging the illegal exodus of Cubans, and after demanding an end to the blockade as a solution, the Cuban Government opened its shores to emigrants without traveling papers.

Secretive nighttime departures have since been replaced by noisy ones in which relatives and friends say goodbye in the presence of curious bystanders and policemen, who now only stop those who try to leave with minors.

The departures by thousands of Cubans who are even willing to be taken to the Guantanamo Naval Base are reminiscent of scenes from the Mariel boatlift.

"It looks like a rerun of the same movie. The only thing that has changed is the characters," said one elderly worker [word indistinct] who has had two sons residing in Miami for many years.

At the beach in Cojimar, another departure point of the exodus, an enormous raft called "El Galeon" was launched into the sea. This raft was named in honor, according to its builders, of a colonial vessel that every afternoon plies the coastline with dozens of tourists.

"El Galeon" remained almost one week in Cojimar, the fishing town in which U.S. writer Ernest Hemingway once lived, awaiting better weather before putting out to sea. Finally at sunset on Saturday, 20 crew members launched it amid applause from dozens of curious onlookers, flashes from photographers, and a U.S. television crew that filmed the event.

Delegates to Cuba-U.S. Emigration Talks Comment

Cossio: Blockade 'Essence' of Problem

FL0209135594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Telephone interview with Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, chief of the Americas desk of the Ministry of Foreign

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Relations and member of the Cuban delegation to the Cuba-U.S. talks, in New York, by Roberto Cavada, in Havana; from the "Doing Radio" program—live]

[Text] [Cavada] Good morning Cossio.

[Cossio] Good morning Cavada.

[Cavada] We appreciate your taking the time to talk to us. We are aware that you were in a very important meeting and that the talks between the Washington and Havana Governments are only a few minutes away. We would like your view of what happened in yesterday's meeting behind closed doors at the United Nations.

[Cossio] Yesterday consisted of a presentation of positions. It did not progress beyond that. Cuba's view was laid on the table clearly: the fact that although we are willing to discuss any issue with the United States, a solution to the so-called crisis can only be attained by attacking, or tackling, the root; the essence of the problem with the U.S. has the economic blockade at the core. This has been clearly reiterated by our delegation. They have insisted on only discussing immigration issues, although in their presentation one can see that at times they depart from the immigration issue. This is what has taken place so far. We will continue today. It is not known when it will end, or if it will continue at a later date. At least we are scheduled to meet all day long. We will see what progress can be made. I repeat, as we told them, that we are willing to discuss anything but our view and clear position that a solution to this issue is not going to be reached by only discussing immigration issues, must be understood clearly.

[Cavada] We heard today that Miami media has been stressing that one of the points tentatively brought up by the U.S. delegation was granting at least 20,000 visas. That is, establish a quota cap of 20,000 visas on the accords approved in 1984. Is this true? Is it also true that a quota cap was not discussed?

[Cossio] This is part of the talks. However, presenting that as a concession is very weak because it is nothing more than simply fulfilling the accord they signed in 1984, and U.S. law which already allows for more than 20,000 visas for certain countries on the basis of certain mechanisms of qualification, or by using the diverse exceptions provided by law. Therefore, this is not, nor can it be understood as a negotiation concession on their part. They would be simply fulfilling the 1984 accord and U.S. law. However, we still have to see how the whole thing goes.

[Cavada] Your opinion is that it would not be a new element since there is already an immigration accord between both nations and in accordance with U.S. laws. Right?

[Cossio] We do not see this as a new element. If it were part of a group of other issues, then it could be seen as a new element.

[Cavada] We have also heard about the statements by State Department spokesman David Johnson on the main four points on which the talks focused yesterday. They want to include in the talks the return to Cuba of Cubans who immigrated in 1980 during the Mariel boatlift and are currently in Miami jails. Was this issue discussed at any length in the talks?

[Cossio] They did indeed present those four points but the talks did not revolve around those points, nor was it restricted to those points alone.

[Cavada] Will Cuba present other points today in addition to those already being discussed?

[Cossio] Cuba has presented almost all its points. We have discussed everything we believe is part of the problem.

[Cavada] In your opinion has the American delegation seriously listened to the Cuban position?

[Cossio] The discussion has been serious, both sides have a respectful attitude. The issue is not the seriousness of the delegation, but the seriousness of the U.S. commitment to truly solve the problem. We insist that unless the essence of the problem is tackled, no matter how serious the negotiations are, the solution of the problem is not being taken seriously.

[Cavada] We understand that the talks will be held today at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations. Is that right?

[Cossio] Yes.

[Cavada] And will last all day long.

[Cossio] Yes.

[Cavada] We hope to be able to get in contact with you soon and get further details later today. We know the talks are intense, and tiring. Thank you very much.

Cossio: Lack of 'Any Great Progress'

FL0309135294 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1228 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Telephone interview with Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, director of the Americas Desk of the Ministry of Foreign Relations and member of the delegation to the Cuba-U.S. talks, in New York, by Roberto Cavada in Havana; from the "Doing Radio" program—live]

[Text] [Cavada] Good morning, Cossio.

[Cossio] Good morning, Cavada.

[Cavada] We are glad to have you with us this morning to inform our listeners about yesterday's talks. It has already been reported in Havana that the talks will continue on Sunday. What can you tell us about yesterday's meeting, which we understand lasted long into the evening?

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[Cossio] There is not much to say, Cavada. We cannot say there was any great progress in the talks. Mostly, we continue to reiterate similar points. Both sides continue to make efforts to reach accords. This implies to me that [words indistinct] the accord. However, the efforts continue. It is becoming evident that the talks, and the handling of the issues are not as simple, or easy as some might think. The complexity of the issues shape the discussions. I would even say that the progress attained in understanding the complexity of the issues is perhaps the main accomplishment to date. All I can say is that yesterday we discussed the same issues, that we agreed to hold another meeting on Sunday beginning at 1400. We do not know anything beyond that.

This is a long weekend in the United States. We have to keep that in mind.

[Cavada] Yes, even that has to be kept in mind during negotiations. We were told this morning that the Miami press carried large headlines reporting that the talks were stalled. The NUEVO HERALD reported that the Cuban delegation was insisting on continuing the talks between both governments in the future, in order to reach agreement on other issues, such as the blockade, and that the U.S. delegation was not prepared to discuss this.

Truly, very little has been said about the talks. There is much skepticism in the media. Dispatches continue to predict that not much will be accomplished. All this is based on comments by State Department spokesmen on the immigration issue. There is also much speculation about the future stand of the Cuban Government on illegal immigration; if at some point these illegal departures might once again be halted. Could this really happen in the near future?

[Cossio] First of all, what the HERALD is reporting is untrue. Their description of what is happening at the talks falls short, in addition to the fact that both delegations have agreed to keep the negotiations secret. Evidently, this agreement is being kept because what the HERALD is reporting is completely removed from reality.

Regarding illegal departures, what the Cubans are doing—and this has been publicly stated over and over by Comrade Alarcon—is exercising their right to travel, just as citizens from any other country do. Alarcon has told reporters on many occasion that each country has to worry about its own borders; no country is responsible for protecting another's borders. For example, the United States does not prohibit its citizens from leaving in a boat. No one aboard a boat is asked where they are headed. Although we did so for a time for certain specific reasons, we do not intend to do so again, so far. Anyone can leave in a boat. Of course, we will continue the measures soberly adopted by the Border Guard to protect children, teenagers, and warning about the danger of taking to the sea recklessly. However, we are not going to dedicate ourselves to prevent departures by force. This has been reiterated. Comrade Alarcon has said so to the media on numerous occasions.

[Cavada] Thank you very much, Cossio, for your statements. We will try to contact you again on Monday.

Cossio: Complexity of Issue Obvious

PA0309195794 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1855 GMT 3 Sep 94

["Cossio: Complexity of Negotiations With the United States Evident"—PRENSA LATINA headline]

[Text] Havana, 3 Sep (PL)—Cuba believes the complexity of the issues related to the crisis is becoming obvious within the framework of the current negotiations with the United States, said a member of the Cuban delegation to the talks today.

Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, North America director at the Foreign Ministry, said in an interview with a local radio station that understanding this complexity and the factors involved in the immigration issue has been the most important accomplishment so far.

The talks began on 1 September and will continue tomorrow, as the site for the meetings in New York alternates between the diplomatic missions [words indistinct].

Fernandez de Cossio, a member of the Cuban delegation headed by Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, confirmed the existence of an agreement between the two parties to hold the meeting "behind closed doors," without giving the press any specific information about the development of the talks.

Fernandez de Cossio said reports in the U.S. media about the exodus of Cubans who want to travel to the United States have been distorted. He said "what those people are doing is exercising their right to travel, as in any other country."

He said each nation must protect its borders, without asking other countries to carry out that function for them. For example, he said in the United States nobody asks anyone leaving on a boat what is his final destination.

So far, he added, we do not plan to ask questions, but the measures we have seriously adopted to prevent the departure of certain people who irresponsibly take to the sea will remain in force.

Fernandez de Cossio said force in that regard will not be used to prevent the departure of immigrants.

Cossio: 'No Results Yet'

PA0509142594 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1835 GMT 4 Sep 94

[All quotation marks as received]

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[Text] Havana, 4 Sep (EFE)—The talks between Cuba and the United States that resumed in New York today "are going slowly" and the atmosphere "is positive, but specific results are still very scarce," a member of the Cuban delegation told the Sunday weekly JUVENTUD REBELDE.

Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, one of the Cuban delegates to the talks, told the Cuban publication that he attributes Saturday's recess to two things: "The first one is to give us time to review a text on which they (the United States) are soliciting our opinion." He added: "In addition, it is apparent that this is a holiday weekend for the U.S. delegates."

The official noted that so far all that has been accomplished "is a presentation of positions on behalf of the two sides, but there is nothing that clearly indicates any progress has been made. There are no results yet."

Fernandez de Cossio added: "The path to a solution is still being sought, and it is a very long road. The climate is positive, but specific results are still very scarce."

"The negotiations are not advancing; the same things are being said over and over again," he said, noting that the talks are being held "within a climate that is correct, positive, and respectful."

He explained that the Cuban delegation stated that a solution must be found for a problem that is much more complex than migratory issues per se." However, the response from the U.S. delegation "has been to try to avoid the discussion of any topics they do not consider to be technically migratory."

"It has been proven," he further noted, "that reality demands the inevitable discussion of issues that are not entirely migratory in nature."

Fernandez de Cossio disclosed that the U.S. delegation has proposed an increase in legal migration in exchange for Cuba's restoration of the ban on illegal departures from the island. With regard to this, he said the Cuban position is that "we do not intend to establish a cordon around Cuba or to rescind our decision not to protect U.S. borders."

As to the number of legal immigrants the United States would receive per year, he reported they are proposing 20,000, adding, "they are simply proposing that they comply with an agreement signed 10 years ago—a commitment they have so far failed to meet."

Cuba and the United States signed an agreement in 1984 that established that Washington would grant up to 20,000 visas a year to Cubans who wanted to immigrate to the United States. According to remarks made by President Fidel Castro in his most recent public appearance, the United States only granted 964 visas last year.

"We have clearly stated," Fernandez de Cossio stressed, "that we are not responsible for this, although, in any case, we could cooperate. We cannot take measures, however, just to get them to comply with things we have already agreed upon or to comply with their own laws."

He added that Cuba "has demanded a suspension of subversive radio broadcasts which, along with the economic situation created by the blockade, are an important source of motivation for illegal departures. "The United States has also requested the return of 5,000 people who are excludable [excluibles] from the 1984 agreements."

"Regarding this," he remarked, "we have not even discussed the issue," and Cuba has not requested the elimination of the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act in the talks held so far.

Cossio: 'Every Day has Been a Probable Last Day'

FL0509220294 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Telephone interview with Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, director of the Americas Desk of the Ministry of Foreign Relations and member of the delegation to the Cuba-U.S. talks in New York, by Roberto Cavada, in Havana; from the "National Radio News," date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Cossio] Cuba's point of view on immigration is that in the first place, the United States has to adopt ... [pauses] both sides must try to find a corrective solution to the great backlog of requested visas, a result of noncompliance with the 1984 agreements. It is not true that Cuba has requested 100,000 visas a year. Cuba has requested a large number of visas through which, in a short period of time, this accumulated backlog can be resolved. This is what we requested, to comply with what was agreed to years ago.

[Cavada] It is rumored that there might be other meetings, in October, in Havana.

[Cossio] None of that has been discussed. The only thing we know is that we will probably meet today, and this depends on an answer we are awaiting from the U.S. delegation. However, independent of that answer, we are to explore the possibility of meeting sometime today.

[Cavada] Would today be the last day of the negotiations?

[Cossio] That is something no one knows. Everyday has been a probable last day. It all depends on how the negotiations are going. One characteristic of negotiations such as these is that one never knows when they are over. The only information one has at the end of a meeting is when the next meeting is going to take place.

Continuation of Talks Termed 'Positive'

FL0609125394 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 0132 GMT 6 Sep 94

[Text] Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, member of the Cuban delegation, has stated that Cuba and the United

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States have decided to meet on 6 September to analyze a new proposal presented by the U.S. delegation. Cossio made no further comments about the proposal. Cossio stated that Michael Skol, deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs and head of the U.S. delegation, would present the proposal. No information was given in reference to the time or place where the meeting would be held.

The system that the delegations have been following consists of alternate use of their respective permanent U.N. missions as the site for talks. According to this method the U.S. mission should host the forthcoming meeting. The opinion among many observers is that the talks are at a standstill. At the same time the decision to continue with the dialogue is considered a positive element.

State Department Spokesman, Alarcon Cited

FL0309141994 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Text] Talks between the Cuban and U.S. delegations in New York will resume on the afternoon of 4 September, according to U.S. State Department spokesman David Johnson, who said the discussions have been serious and professional. Johnson declined to answer a reporter's question regarding the results of the talks, but reiterated that the only topic of discussion on the agenda of the U.S. delegation is Cuban immigration to the United States.

However, the head of the Cuban delegation, Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government and former foreign minister, stated on U.S. television that it is impossible to separate the issue of migration and Washington's hostile policy toward Cuba. Alarcon added that for over three decades the White House has refused to treat Cuba as a sovereign, independent nation. Alarcon also stressed that it is impossible to resolve the disagreement between Cuba and the United States until the criminal U.S. blockade of Cuba is terminated.

Alarcon on Position at Immigration Talks

PA0409031194 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0300 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] United Nations, 3 Sep (PL)—The pragmatic impossibility of separating the immigration issue from the U.S. economic blockade against Cuba was explained today by Ricardo Alarcon during meetings with various sectors of U.S. society.

The president of the Cuban National Assembly (parliament) of the People's Government [ANPP] and head of the country's delegation to the current talks with the United States met at the permanent Cuban mission to the United Nations with representatives of Cuban friendship and solidarity organizations, as well as members of the Cuban-American community in New York.

While presenting numerous arguments, Alarcon pointed out that the link between the two problems lies in the fact that Cuban emigration to the United States, including the current illegal exodus, has been caused by the policy implemented by the United States over the past 35 years—a policy designed to economically suffocate Cuba to get it to capitulate.

He added that during this entire time there have been attempts to exploit the immigration issue and use it as a tool to undermine and oppose the Cuban Revolution.

Alarcon stated that this has included the practice of allowing those who came to this country illegally to enter without a passport, visa, or permit; encouraging illegal departures through thousands and thousands of hours of radio broadcasts to Cuba; and encouraging those who seized vessels, murdered, and abducted hostages in their efforts to leave Cuba by receiving them as heroes.

He indicated that the Cuban Adjustment Act also was an additional inducement to illegal migration, because it granted entry without any restrictions to the illegals and offered a residence permit one year and a day after their arrival in the United States—a privilege offered only to Cubans.

Other incentives include the Torricelli Law, which strengthened the blockade, and, ironically, the most recent measures adopted by President William Clinton following the arrival of illegal refugees in recent weeks.

For the first time in 34 years, Alarcon noted, the United States has announced changes in its policy by declaring it will not allow Cuban refugees to enter the country and will house them at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo, which is part of Cuban territory occupied against the nation's will.

As a result of this, Alarcon stressed, our clear position at the talks is that there can be no definite agreement on the immigration issue without resolving the question of the blockade.

It is very difficult to find a solution to this problem without discussing the core issue—the heart of the problem—for every serious analysis must take the root causes of the problem into account.

This will require, he said, a fundamental change in U.S. policy.

Alarcon said the offer of 20,000 visas a year on its own is not enough.

Along these lines, he recalled that in 1984 the two countries signed an agreement granting up to 20,000 visas a year—a figure based on statistics in the hands of the United States and which list requests by relatives here and petitions by Cubans on the island.

Nevertheless, he added, between 1984 and 1994, the United States granted only 11,222 visas. In other words, within a decade, they granted only a little more than half

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of the amount they themselves had calculated for a single year of legal emigration. During this period, meanwhile, they received nearly 14,000 illegal emigrants.

He added that now the United States is asking Cuba to take steps to put an end to the exodus, while in the past it denounced Cuba in international forums precisely for attempting to stop illegal departures.

In commenting further on this, Alarcon said more than 90 percent of the people who have legally travelled from Cuba to the United States eventually return to Cuba, because they know they can visit whenever they wish or whenever their families can receive them.

In another part of his statement, Alarcon said that like never before has the topic of Cuba been so highly visible in U.S. public opinion, adding that he cannot recall a previous time in which all U.S. media have covered talks so broadly and in such detail.

He also stressed that more and more people from the most diverse leanings and sectors in the United States are calling for a solution to the dispute and the lifting of the blockade. In his opinion, these elements are the building blocks for change.

Both in his meeting with U.S. organizations, as well as at his meeting with representatives of the Cuban-North American community in New York, Alarcon replied to numerous questions on the talks and the current situation in Cuba.

The talks were attended by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; the Reverend Lucius Walker from the Pastors for Peace Movement; and representatives from the Venceremos Brigade, the Center for Cuban Studies, the Cuba Information Project, the National Committee for Independent Political Action, the 12 December Pro- Human Rights Movement, the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, and other political and social groups.

Also present were members of the Casa de las Americas Executive Board, the Dominican Workers Party, groups representing Puerto Ricans in the United States, and others.

Alarcon Stresses Blockade-Immigration Link

FL0409202394 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1930 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] In several meetings with diverse sectors of American society, Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, head of the Cuba delegation to the New York talks, has explained the impossibility of separating the immigration problem from the U.S. blockade. Alarcon stated that the link between the two problems is the fact that Cuban emigration, including the current exodus, is the result of the policy maintained by the United States to try to economically asphyxiate Cuba. Alarcon added that for the first time in 34 years, the United States has announced a change in that policy, announcing that it will deny entry to Cuban immigrants and will hold them at Guantanamo Naval Base, a territory occupied against Cuba's will.

This is why, he added, our position is that there is no definite solution to the immigration problem unless the issue of the blockade is solved.

Robaina: Talks at 'Standstill'

PA0509193294 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1853 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Havana, 5 Sep (EFE)—Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina today ascertained that the talks between Cuba and the United States "are at a standstill," and he stressed, "there has been no rapprochement or anything that might enable us to see flexibility on behalf of the United States."

In remarks to Spanish reporters hours before his departure on his first-ever official visit to Madrid, Robaina said the sides "remain at two extremes."

The minister reiterated that the root of the problem is "the blockade," and he added that, consequently, Cuba cannot just agree with an immigration accord without securing the continuity of the current talks in New York.

Robaina said: "Steps are needed to hold future talks, and we have not yet taken the first step, because the United States has said it will only talk about migration, and we have said we do not want to limit the talks to this issue."

Meanwhile, the Cuban Government denied that during the negotiations Cuba requested the granting of more than 100,000 visas per year to put an end to the rafters' mass exodus.

Robaina said that during his trip to Spain he will not call for special support against the "blockade," because "Spain is already sensitive to this issue; it has not only dared to vote at the United Nations in favor of Cuba, but also to make investments in Cuba."

In terms of the position of Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, Robaina said he expected "what we already have"—namely, "absolute respect" for the way in which Cuban authorities are facing the current crisis in their relations with the United States.

Robaina stressed, "there will be absolutely no reason for tension" during the visit, although he did admit, "there are discrepancies on two important matters: democracy and human rights." He noted that he is interested in hearing the Spanish Government's views "in every way," as well as in having Cuba's views be heard.

In this regard, he announced that Ecuadoran Ambassador Jose Ayala Lasso, the UN high commissioner for human rights, will visit Cuba on 18-23 September.

He said he will explain to Spanish officials the progress of the current economic reform process, including the

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measures that have already been taken, "as well as those that are about to be taken." However, he would not give any details on the latter.

"I am not going to announce them here, because am I not the official responsible for announcing them," he told reporters. All he would say was that he will give "a positive answer" to concerns expressed by Spain with regard to the process to transform the Cuban economy.

In recent weeks, official sources in Havana have hinted that the government is about to announce a degree of liberalization of the agricultural market, which will allow peasants and cooperatives to sell their products freely once they have met state quotas. Up until now, the state has kept marketing and distribution under its control, and farmers can only keep quantities needed for their own consumption.

Robaina will begin his official visit on Wednesday with meetings with his Spanish counterpart Javier Solana and Prime Minister Gonzalez. He also will visit the Ibero-American Cooperation Institute, the Spanish Federation of Business Organizations, and the Parliament. On Friday, Robaina will travel to the Canary Islands, and on 13 September, he will hold a news conference before returning to Cuba.

PRENSA LATINA Notes 2d Day of Talks With U.S. at UN

PA0209175694 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1603 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] United Nations, 2 Sep (PL)—The second day of talks between the Cuban and U.S. delegations was initiated today under absolute privacy.

Michael Skol, deputy assistant secretary of state for Inter-American Affairs, arrived accompanied by his collaborators at the Cuban diplomatic mission at around 1000 local (1400 GMT).

Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly of the People's Power who is heading the Cuban delegation, which consists of four other members, was waiting for him inside the 12-story building to continue the talks, which began yesterday at the U.S. Mission at the United Nations.

No details of the dialogue have been disclosed, and this nondisclosure is interpreted as a sign of the serious, professional, hardworking atmosphere in which they are being held, as both parties stated yesterday.

The United States has publicly stated its intentions in these negotiations are limited to the migration issue, which has been worsened by the illegal departure of Cuban citizens toward the Florida coasts. Following a presidential decision, those citizens are being intercepted on the high seas and taken to the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo, which is Cuban territory the United States is occupying against Cuba's will.

Cuba has advocated, however, a discussion of the causes that have led to the exodus and blames it on the U.S. blockade, which has lasted more than three decades. The blockade has been reinforced since approval of the so-called Torricelli Law and, more recently, with President William Clinton's approval of new restrictive measures.

Today's meeting will be divided up into two working sessions; that is, the one that was initiated recently and an afternoon session.

Though no official details of the meeting have been disclosed, it has been learned the talks should end today, but the possibility of extending them until 3 September has not been ruled out.

Correspondents at the United Nations have asked the negotiators to hold a news conference at UN Headquarters, but there is still no. [sentence as received]

PRENSA LATINA Reports Resumption of Talks With U.S. at UN

PA0409214494 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1937 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Excerpts] United Nations, 4 Sep (PL)—Cuban and U.S. delegations resumed today the bilateral talks that began on 1 September and continued on 2 September with two sessions on each day.

The negotiators, headed by Ricardo Alarcon, president of the Cuban parliament, and Michael Skol, adjunct assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, met once again at the U.S. United Nations Mission after a 36-hour recess.

The first day of the previous meetings were held at the U.S. UN Mission, the second at the Cuban UN Mission.

The reason for the bilateral meetings is the immigration issue, which has intensified over the past few weeks due to the increased [words indistinct], encouraged for more than three decades by the United States, which welcomed Cuban refugees without any restrictions whatsoever, granting them every right while systematically failing to honor an agreement signed by the two countries in 1984. [passage omitted]

The U.S. position in response to this issue thus far has been to limit the discussion to the solving of the refugee problem, offering a minimum of 20,000 visas yearly for Cubans who would like to travel to the United States.

An official report provided by the Cuban delegation notes from 1984 to July 1994 the United States had granted 11,222 visas, a little more than 50 percent of what it had agreed to grant yearly, while it received during the same period almost 14,000 illegals, including individuals who had seized boats, committed murder, and taken hostages to achieve their goals.

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With this precedent and the Cuban position of broaching the problem in its [word indistinct], the talks will continue today.

PRENSA LATINA Reports End of 3d Day of Talks With U.S.

PA0409232894 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2242 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] United Nations, 4 Sep (PL)—The third day of talks between the Cuban and U.S. delegations, this time at the office of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, ended after more than three hours of work.

Today's session began at 1400 (1800 GMT) and ended shortly after 1700. There is no specific information yet on the subjects being discussed, but it was learned the talks will continue on 5 September.

The delegations are headed by Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government (parliament) of Cuba, and Michael Skol, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

The Cuban-U.S. negotiations began on 1 September with two working sessions at the U.S. Mission and continued on 2 September under the same format at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations, where the delegates will meet again tomorrow.

Radio Havana Reports U.S. Immigration Talks To Continue

PA0509135494 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 5 Sep 94

[From the "Morning Information Review" newscast]

[Text] Today, Monday, Cuba and the United States continue their talks in New York. This will mark the fourth working session of the talks on migration issues—talks which began last Thursday.

So far, no information has been released on specific results. The only positive sign is the fact that the respective positions continue to be analyzed. Cuba wants to discuss migration problems, as well as the causes that have prompted them and are worsening them—namely, the blockade the United States has maintained for more than three decades and the subsequent measures that intensify the blockade. The United States, meanwhile, wants to limit any possible agreement to the migration issue without examining the causes that have provoked this problem and the measures that are exacerbating it.

The U.S. media, which have given exceptional coverage to the talks through editorials, commentaries, and interviews with people from various leanings, have suggested to the Clinton administration the adoption of measures to lift or ease what they call the economic embargo. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, a U.S. civil rights activist, told a television network that Cuba does not represent any threat to the United States, and he urged the Washington authorities to lift the blockade.

In Madrid, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez said it seems practically impossible to isolate the Cuban-U.S. talks from the tense situation taking place in Cuba.

Talks With United States To Resume 6 Sep

PA0509205394 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2014 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] United Nations, 5 Sep (PL)—The negotiations between Cuba and the United States will continue tomorrow based on an agreement between the two parties at today's meeting, which lasted over 50 minutes.

According to the program followed in the talks—which started on Thursday—the next round of talks will be held at the U.S. Permanent Mission to the United Nations, because today's talks were held at the Cuban Mission.

Although there have been no official reports on these meetings, a spokesman of the U.S. delegation today [words indistinct] who described as premature any speculations about results.

Michael Skol, the assistant undersecretary of state for inter- American affairs—who heads the group of negotiators from the United States—attended alone today's round of talks with the Cuban delegation, led by Ricardo Alarcon, president of the island's parliament.

It was unofficially learned that no progress has been made in the negotiations because the United States is insisting on restricting them to the migration problem, as well as an offer of no less than 20,000 visas a year for Cuban citizens who wish to travel to the United States.

Cuba insists on the need to discuss the cause of this emigration, which it attributes to the restrictive measures of the U.S. blockade on the island, which has been in effect for more than 3 decades.

Talks With U.S. Secret, 'Serious, Professional, Proper'

FL0309020194 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Sep 94

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[Text] The second day of talks between the delegations of Cuba and the United States has taken place today in complete secrecy. The morning and evening sessions of the meeting held this Friday took place in the 12-story building that houses Cuba's Permanent UN Mission.

At this time, there has been no information given on the talks. Both sides have agreed to keep this situation discreet and representative of the serious, professional, proper work atmosphere in which the negotiations are being held.

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[Crowd shouts: Cuba yes, blockade no!] At the time that the morning talks between Cuba and the United States were taking place in New York, protesters marched in front of the building housing Cuba's UN mission, demanding an end to the blockade and to Washington's aggressive policies towards Cuba. [Crowd shouts: Cuba yes, blockade no!]

Further on 'Serious, Professional' Talks

PA0309022494 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0100 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Report by PRENSA LATINA's Roberto Molina from New York City; from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] The U.S.-Cuban talks continued today for the second straight day at the Cuban mission office at the United Nations. The first of today's meetings was held amid a serious, professional, and working atmosphere, just as the two parties had agreed it should be. There are no reports whatsoever on the issues discussed during these talks. We only know that the two parties went over the broad agendas they brought into the negotiations. As is the case with all negotiations, they will consolidate those areas in which conciliation and progress can be made.

We also lack reports on how the talks will continue in the future. We only know that the talks continued this afternoon, following a working luncheon attended by both delegations. It is presumed that these talks could conclude sometime later today, but there is a possibility of holding a brief meeting tomorrow morning to issue a statement. [words indistinct] foreign correspondents at the United Nations asked the two parties to hold a news conference here at the UN building. However, because we lack definite information on the date and time that these talks will conclude, we have been unable to confirm whether this news conference will be held at all.

This is all the information I have, because, as I previously said, the two parties agreed not to comment on the issues discussed at the talks to avoid false expectations and to work in a climate of discretion, which they believe is the most feasible to avoid distractions and make progress.

Report Notes 'Uncertainty Continues' at Immigration Talks

PA0409025394 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Telephone report by Marcos Castrellon from the United States; from the "Evening Information Review" newscast—live]

[Text] [First unidentified announcer] We now have Marcos Castrellon on the telephone directly from the United States. He will give us details on what the domestic press has to say regarding the talks between Cuba and the United States. What is the latest news?

[Castrellon] The latest news I have on the talks is that the uncertainty continues. As I have reported before, the talks are being held behind closed doors, and hardly anything has been leaked to the press. Today, for example, some headlines say the talks are bogged down—something I find very surprising, because there was never a previously announced timeframe concerning how many days or hours the talks would last. All we know is that the talks are centering on immigration matters.

Today the press claims, however, that the talks are bogged down, and two basic issues are mentioned: 1) Cuba's insistence on a commitment for future talks; and 2) the fact that the U.S. negotiators admit they are not prepared. There are also certain undertones.

Right from the beginning, the United States has maintained the position that it only wanted to discuss immigration issues, and it seems that this has been the case up until now. The Cubans, on the other hand, have said from the start that we agree to discuss immigration issues, although we feel this is not the heart of the problem. Immigration agreements could be reached, but until more important issues are dealt with—issues that are at the heart of all of these immigration problems—any results from the talks will be fleeting and feature no permanent solution. Here, we are specifically referring to the embargo.

The truth is that the United States is coming under pressure because it has taken a hard line. Indeed, their statements seem to indicate this. In the background, the right-wing extremist Cuban exiles are exerting genuine pressure. These people are even criticizing the United States for entering into negotiations, even though these talks have so far been limited to immigration. These groups fear that subsequent developments might broaden or improve relations with Cuba. In turn, we have seen federal officials going to Miami to calm these people who are warning that if the topics of discussion are broadened, there could be riots here, which is indeed the case.

[First announcer] I was just about to ask a question about this. Despite these talks, extremist groups are regrettably carrying out actions. I would like you to touch on this. I understand that this is taking place not only in the United States, but in Puerto Rico as well.

[Castrellon] That is correct. In Puerto Rico the press reports that protests were held yesterday at a travel agency that organizes trips to Cuba. A reporter was even attacked. Moreover, the owner of the travel agency, according to the news, had to take legal action, because he received death threats and has been told his office will be burned down.

More than anything else, this shows the great degree of desperation and frustration growing among the Cuban

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community, even among the Puerto Rican community. Most of this frustration is due to the fact that apparent U.S. steps to stem the exodus of rafters have had little effect. Nearly 30,000 rafters have left Cuba this year, most of them in the past two weeks. Obviously U.S. measures have failed to stem the flow. These measures include detentions at Guantanamo Naval Base, where there are already more than 16,000 Cubans. This is becoming a real pressure cooker with an unpredictable outcome. This has many people frustrated—people who for years grew used to seeing Cubans being granted certain privileges that were denied to other people of the world who came to the United States one way or another.

The talks resume tomorrow afternoon. Probably some sort of solution will emerge, such as a U.S. proposal to grant more than 20,000 visas at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. This is rather thorny for them, because they would have to implement certain measures to guarantee this. Whatever happens, however, Cubans will again be granted privileges that are denied to others.

[Second unidentified announcer] I also believe this is not going to resolve the root of the problem, which the Cuban Government has always said is the blockade. Moreover, this is not a new proposal that has been presented to the Cuban delegation. If we are going to change the migration agreements every 10 years and increase the number of visas—something which, in practice, is not fulfilled—we will still be left sitting on our hands.

[Castrellon] That is correct, particularly because it has been widely proven that the recent measures, including the ones that run counter to the reunification of families—counter to family relations by preventing travel and so on—have not yielded the desired effects. In fact, these measures have not been successful whatsoever and are yielding no solutions.

U.S. 'Uncomfortable' at Talks; October Round Rumored

FL0509160594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Telephone interview with Marcos Castellon, in Miami, by Maria Elena Alonso, in Havana, on 5 September; from the "Doing Radio" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Alonso] We have been following the U.S.-Cuban talks in New York for the last few days. Marcos, what did you hear about the talks over the weekend?

[Castellon] The most important information filtered through this week comes from comments made by the U.S. delegation to the talks. I would like to stress that the Cuban delegation, headed by Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, is maintaining a much more moderate attitude. They have made very few comments to the media. However, the U.S. delegation appears to be somewhat uncomfortable. It is being said that today there were substantial differences during the third day of talks, held yesterday afternoon. David Jones, U.S. State Department spokesman, has said that there should not be any speculation on whether any agreement is to be reached. The U.S. delegation considers that the offer made to grant a minimum of 20,000 visas yearly at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana is a generous offer. At the same time, they say that the Cuban proposal—requesting over 100,000 visas—is ridiculous. The Cuban proposal is aimed at alleviating the current crisis. We must bear in mind that even though they say the proposal is ridiculous, in the last decade the United States has granted far less than the agreed 20,000 visas yearly. The United States has not complied with that number, only a maximum of 2,000 or at the most 3,000 visas yearly were being granted. Last year alone there were 134,000 visas requested in Havana. Therefore, Cuba's proposal for 100,000 visas to alleviate the current situation does not seem so farfetched. There are also rumors that after these talks, there will be another round of talks in Havana, probably in October. However, I repeat, this information has not been confirmed by either delegation. Basically, that is the current situation at the talks in New York.

[Alonso] Marcos, we have followed media reports stating that Alarcon met with organizations expressing solidarity with Cuba in New York. We would like to know what happened during this meeting. Can you give us any information about this meeting?

[Castellon] Well, once again I have to stress that there is very little information available about the official talks and to this other meeting. Yes, during the weekend there has been a meeting. Approximately 12 U.S. personalities met with the Cuban delegation at Cuba's mission in New York. Obviously, after the meeting these personalities stated, to the media, that they had broached the current crisis. They all coincided that the root of the problem is the embargo and that this issue should be broached at the talks. This is not strange because even the U.S. conservative press and well-known journalists such as (William Bobely), who is an extreme right-winger, believe that U.S. policies toward Cuba should be changed. They believe that there should be a different policy implemented and not the embargo. They see that in the current situation the embargo is obsolete. This form of relation with Cuba is obsolete and it is time to change.

[Alonso] Marcos, with reference to the violent events that have been taking place lately, has there been any this weekend?

[Castellon] Yes, Maria Elena, the human drama of rafters crossing the Florida Straits toward the United States continues and so do the detentions at the Guantanamo Naval Base. In Guantanamo, there are thousands and thousands of Cubans and Haitians being held. The tension is mounting, there have been reports of sick children, there are minimal living conditions, and there is a lot of confusion and distress. Today, the press

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reflects the opinion of many of the rafters detained at the Guantanamo Naval Base. Once the rafters found out that Jorge Mas Canosa and the Cuban-American National Foundation agreed with the measures implemented by the U.S. Government, holding them in that huge concentration camp, they consider Mas Canosa a traitor. They have very bitter words for Jorge Mas Canosa, who without doubt is largely responsible for this situation, as well as being a promoter of these measures. However, Mas Canosa is dealing with double standards. He has stated that the U.S. Government is studying the possibility of reestablishing the Exodus Program, a program that the Foundation had invented to bring Cubans living in third countries to the United States. Mas Canosa has also stated that the program could be used to bring rafters from Guantanamo and other countries into the United States. Therefore, at the same time he is trying to detain the influx of rafters, he is also encouraging more rafters, by telling them that even though they may be taken to Guantanamo, sooner or later they could be admitted into the United States. Returning to your question, there are many people protesting and there is a great deal of frustration on the part of extremists who call for a total blockade, an invasion and war with Cuba.

Unfortunately, I must inform that early Sunday morning the first evident act of terrorist violence took place. Two Molotov cocktails were thrown at the offices of the REPLICA magazine here, in Miami. This magazine is edited by Max Lesnick, a man who has nothing to do with the current situation. However, Lesnick did take part in the Nation and the Emigre Conference that took place in Havana last April and he is against the embargo. So, as you can see, this is the situation here, in Miami, where the current level of frustration could lead to violent situations and polarize the community.

[Alonso] Marcos, thank you very much.

GRANMA Comments on U.S. Talks With Government

PA0309152094 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0953 GMT 3 Sep 94

[PRENSA LATINA headline: "It Is Not Easy To Stop Massive Exodus Without Reviewing Causes"]

[Text] Havana, 3 Sep (PL)—It is not easy to talk about solutions to stop the massive exodus of illegal Cuban immigrants while setting aside the causes that have encouraged, promoted, and legalized it for years, the Cuban daily GRANMA stated today.

Commenting on the current talks between Cuba and the United States in New York, GRANMA expressed hopes these first steps that are taken in a "serious and professional climate" will open new paths, realistic and mature, without overlooking the real causes of the current "wave of rafters."

The article stated the positions of the "parties involved in the conflict," that is, Cuba and the United States, have been outlined and defined more clearly one month after the so-called "crisis of Cuban rafters"

The daily added: Cuba's position has been precise and clear, without moving one millimeter from its strategy, which is based on the causes that originated the current conflict. Those causes are found beyond technical aspects of the immigration policy and essentially derive from the criminal and anachronistic blockade and the constant calls to destroy the revolution.

The article stated the Cuban Government has shown flexibility and maturity in handling the situation when issuing instructions and implementing tactics in accordance with the circumstances.

Meanwhile, the demand that the U.S. Administration adopt a more realistic policy toward Cuba has polarized and contradicts the guidelines followed by Clinton's staff, which the U.S. media have described to a great extent as "emotional," GRANMA added.

The daily noted in that regard the possibility of totally or gradually lifting the blockade to handle the Cuban problem, which has become a major issue since 19 August, when Clinton announced a 180-degree change in U.S. policy toward Cubans who illegally arrived in the United States.

GRANMA stated the truth is "the embargo" is becoming more contradictory each day, although this does not imply the adoption of a sympathetic position toward the island, especially considering that Washington is negotiating "with other repressive communist regimes," such as Vietnam, North Korea, and China, and that more people believe in the need to "hold talks with Castro" and "to participate in a broader dialogue with the Cuban Government."

Radio Notes Talks Reports, U S.-Panamanian Agreement

FL0509193294 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 5 Sep 94

[From the "First Thing" program]

[Text] Cuban-U.S. talks will continue this afternoon at Cuba's permanent mission to the United Nations, in New York. PRENSA LATINA considers the announcement of a fourth day of negotiations the only positive result of the three-hour meeting on 4 September.

AFP reports that observers have pointed out that the will to continue analyzing the issues by both delegations means that there has been some progress in the negotiations. AFP also reported that the U.S. delegation has proposed the creation of a legal immigration program that would admit a minimum of 20,000 Cubans yearly. In 1984, Cuba and the United States agreed on that amount but the United States has not lived up to that commitment. According to AFP, Ricardo Alarcon, who heads Cuba's delegation, told THE NEW YORK TIMES

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on 4 September that the U.S. delegation's first proposal—increasing the number of visas to Cubans wishing to emigrate to the United States—was insufficient. Alarcon supposedly said that Cuba would like Washington to admit all Cubans who wish to emigrate to the United States over a specific period, perhaps one year. According to AFP, Alarcon pointed out that 134,000 Cubans had requested visas to travel to the United States in 1993. PRENSA LATINA has said that Cuba's position during these negotiations consists of debating immigration problems, the causes that have been promoting immigration, and what has been behind the increase in immigration over the last few weeks. These causes include the blockade, the Torricelli Law, and the Clinton administration's recent measures.

The Panamanian Government has announced that starting on 5 September approximately 10,000 Cubans will begin to arrive in the country. These Cubans will be held at U.S. military bases near the Canal for a maximum of six months. Panamanian Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo told the press that this operation will cost the United States approximately $35 million. Lewis also said that the operation had been agreed after three days of negotiations between Panama and the United States, which concluded on 3 September with the signing of an agreement. The 10,000 Cubans will be taken from Guantanamo Naval Base, which is in Cuban territory, to a U.S. military base belonging to the U.S. Southern Command, 15 kilometers southwest of Panama's capital. Citing Panamanian sources, AFP reported that each Cuban will receive a bunk, clothing, shoes, and implements for personal hygiene.

U.S. President William Clinton has written Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares, who assumed office on 1 September, personally asking for his support. According to AFP, this weekend Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina said that shortly several Central American heads of state are to make an announcement with reference to receiving Cubans in their countries. Reina made these statements at the conclusion of Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina's visit to Honduras. Reina did not inform the press which countries would be willing to receive the Cuban immigrants and went on to say that Honduras is deciding how many Cubans it will receive, after the United States officially requested that they receive a certain number.

Colombian President Cited on 'Belligerent' U.S. Policy, Talks

FL0209143394 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Text] Colombian President Ernesto Samper expressed his opposition to the belligerent U.S. policy towards our country and stated that any forceful measure to provoke changes in Cuba would only bring about suffering to the Cubans. In statements to reporters in Panama, Samper expressed his hope for success in the negotiations initiated by Cuba and the United States on 1 September in New York to discuss the issue of emigration of Cubans to North America.

MINREX Postpones Meeting on Women; U.S. Measures Cited

PA0209141794 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0928 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Havana, 2 Sep (PL)—Cuba reiterated today its decision to continue efforts to create more possibilities to expand the contacts of its emigrants with their nation and relatives, while it announced that a meeting on Cuban women was postponed.

A Foreign Ministry [MINREX] statement published in the daily GRANMA said that the postponed meeting sought to give continuity to the Cuban Government policy of normalizing relations with its emigrants.

Sponsored by the Cuban Women's Federation, MINREX, and a group of women from the western province of Matanzas, the event was to have taken place in Havana from 3 to 4 September with the participation of several persons residing abroad, especially in the United States. The organizers of the meeting, the first of its kind since "The Nation and the Emigrants" conference, decided to postpone it "until circumstances allow it to be held as originally planned."

The organizers issued a statement indicating that the measures announced by U.S. President William Clinton on 20 August and implemented by a 24 August Treasury Department declaration seriously impede holding the event as planned.

The note explained, however, that many women living in the United States are committed to attending and do not hesitate to reaffirm their willingness to participate, although they may be indicted upon their return.

The meeting sponsors felt, however, that it would be inappropriate to ask these people to pay such a high price to enjoy the right that is fully recognized by any country that accepts emigrants, the statement noted.

Commentary Decries 'Lie' That Convicts Among Rafters

PA0309032094 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0038 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Commentary by Roberto Morejon from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] [Words indistinct] presence of convicts among the Cuban rafters who were intercepted in the Florida Straits and later taken to Guantanamo Naval Base by U.S. Coast Guard [words indistinct] to divert attention from the concentration camp for Cubans and Haitians.

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Cuban parliament President Ricardo Alarcon, who heads the Antillean delegation at the immigration talks being held with the United States in New York, emphatically rejected the information, saying it was absurd in an interview given to the NBC television network.

One of the (?sources) of this lie, cited by the NEW YORK TIMES, is Florida's Democratic Senator Bob Graham., a regular in the somber rooms of U.S. power brokers, where many anti-Cuban campaigns are conceived. This is one more of those campaigns, and it was hatched just after Graham visited the Guantanamo enclave, which, according to U.S. authorities themselves, does not look anything like a summer camp.

In fact, Guantanamo Naval Base already houses more than 14,000 Haitians and approximately 19,000 Cuban rafters, who were forced to go to that base by the U.S. Coast Guard after the United States abruptly changed its policy on illegal departures from Cuba—departures which Washington had encouraged for 35 years. The Haitians and Cubans are crowded in separate areas at the Guantanamo Naval Base. The only difference is that the number of Cubans increases by the hour, while the number of their neighbors remains the same.

Although the United States will wrest $100 million from U.S. taxpayers to increase the base's capacity from 23,000 to approximately 60,000 people and will contribute $20 million a month for upkeep, it will be difficult to make them breathe an air of [words indistinct]. Tension prevails amid the hundreds of neatly aligned tents that contain 30 military cots apiece, because people face an uncertain future and are annoyed with the excessive dust and insufficient potable water, food, postal services, and entertainment.

The Cuban rafters admit the camp could explode if the current situation does not change and if they are not allowed to enter the United States. The outrageous lie that there are convicts among the rafters could be intended to justify a foreseeable angry outburst at the Guantanamo Naval Base—an outburst which in reality would be prompted by the growing despair and irritation among the people being kept there. Those people are starting to become aware that they are in a genuinely overpopulated jail.

Views of U.S. Sectors Changing on Cuba

PA0109235194 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1048 GMT 1 Sep 94

["Exclusive" article by Cuban writer and journalist Nicanor Leon Cotayo: "The Growing Isolation of Miami 'Extremists'"]

[Text] One of the apparent results of the current situation in relations between the U.S. Government and Cuba is an increase in the loss of credibility of the right-wing extremists in Miami.

These include some of their most prominent spokespersons, such as Jorge Mas Canosa, Lincoln Diaz-Balart, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, who, among other things, after encouraging illegal emigration from Cuba for years, now with calculated language are trying in their own way to adapt themselves to the official measure prohibiting it.

These three Horsemen of the Apocalypse have become avid supporters of the suspension of the shipment of remittances by Cubans residing in the United States to their relatives in the Caribbean nation—funds generally used to purchase food and medicine.

Likewise, and also counter to the interests of the community they claim to represent, they applaud the decision—this, too, having been "hatched" by Mas Canosa—to reduce flights that facilitate the reunification of Cuban families in the United States and on the island.

At the same time, and with more fervor than ever, this sector and its spokespersons are rejecting the slightest possibility of establishing any type of dialogue between U.S. and Cuban authorities, and, on the contrary, they are demanding the further tightening of the economic siege and ardently calling for the establishment of a naval blockade against the small neighboring territory.

In an interview with the U.S. NBC television network on Monday, 29 August, Ros-Lehtinen summed up this view by saying, "one cannot negotiate to have freedom and democracy in Cuba but, rather, must simply take more dynamic measures, such as a naval blockade and an international embargo."

Nevertheless, journalistic sources indicated last week in Washington that the departure of illegal Cuban emigrants heading for Florida has sparked a growing debate within U.S. society.

As an example, the sources indicated that two influential Democratic senators who are members of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Claiborne Pell and Christopher Dodd, harshly criticized the positions of those who uncompromisingly reject the establishment of bilateral contacts.

Pell, who chairs the aforementioned legislative panel, said on one occasion last week that the policy of a blockade against Cuba was contradictory, because "we are strengthening an embargo that worsens conditions and is making the people leave." Meanwhile, Dodd said, "The Cold War is over, but we continue the same."

In Miami, the IPS news agency said many members of the Cuban community there tend to support a halt to the uncontrolled exodus of emigrants and want Washington to negotiate with the island a "broad" policy in this area.

At the same time, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL and THE NEW YORK TIMES joined in again asking that the blockade against Cuba be lifted to influence its

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domestic situation. In one NEW YORK TIMES editorial, it asked: "Well, why not establish broad negotiations with the Castro regime?"

On Sunday, two U.S. television programs again addressed the Cuban topic. They were NBC's "Meet the Press" and "Face the Nation" in which Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Under Secretary Peter Tarnoff, among other guests, participated.

The two officials reiterated the official plan to limit this week's talks to the migration topic, but, at the same time, they stressed that the Democratic administration is not studying the possibility of imposing a naval blockade on Cuba.

Other figures present in the first of these two programs were Lee Hamilton, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Republican Senator Richard Lugar, who defended the advisability of establishing a different policy toward Cuba, including a bilateral dialogue.

On 27 August, on CNN's "News Maker Saturday," Democratic Senator Patrick J. Leahy and Republican Alan K. Simpson expressed viewpoints that coincided with what Hamilton and Lugar said later.

Another eloquent example of the tendency's gradual advance is evident in a PBS program on that same day and which featured the participation of Senator Christopher Dodd and Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

When the latter repeated the extreme right-wing Miami faction's well-known views, including the one claiming "we will continue to review ways to obtain a rational increase in pressure," the senator from Connecticut answered:

"...and, although many would like to see Castro's collapse, myself included, we cannot say this will happen for certain.... There must be a better solution—a more creative, imaginative solution—to this problem rather than simply saying we will not talk, no matter what the issue, under any circumstances."

On Tuesday, Enrique Merino, one of EFE's correspondents in Washington reported that the number of Democratic and Republican congressmen, analysts, and mass media which defend the idea of establishing a dialogue with Havana "has become overwhelming."

Nevertheless, the best-known spokesmen of the ultraconservative group in Miami are still clinging to the script of their increasingly tenacious discourse, which only accepts a single-point agenda—namely, the way in which the adversary will surrender.

Nevertheless, this is not the tendency that is gradually and slowly emerging in the United States, because, among other reasons, a realistic and judicious idea has yet to disappear in the United States: In the end, political recidivism is abhorred and neofascism is rejected, no matter how much they try to cloak themselves in alleged patriotic goals and false libertarian principles.

Naturally, the path that this tendency must traverse is not a short one, and it certainly is not strewn with flowers, and it must therefore cover rough terrain. Nevertheless, it will undoubtedly be worthwhile to follow it without forgetting what a great Spanish poet once said: There is no road for the one who travels on foot because he finds his way as he goes along.

GRANMA Says U.S. Has 'Best Opportunity' To Resolve Exodus

PA0609143994 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1316 GMT 6 Sep 94

[Text] Havana, 6 Sep (PL)—The Cuban newspaper GRANMA reported today that Cuban emigration of the past two decades has been caused by economic factors that have been given a political and ideological slant because of the situation created by the United States to counter the revolution.

The organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba reports in today's edition that the minority of Cubans who have embarked toward the Florida coasts were not spurred into doing this because of a lack of social justice or a lack of political parties.

GRANMA notes: This is the product of a systematic U.S. policy designed to "suffocate us through hunger, and some people, the weaker ones, have capitulated."

The paper reports that the daily scarcities, along with the policy of encouraging people to illegally leave the island as a means of discrediting the revolution, are the ingredients of an appetizing dish being served to the rafters.

GRANMA recalls that the migration issue is not exclusively related to the Cuban-U.S. crisis, adding that its roots must be sought in the unequal development imposed by capitalism, which is unable to satisfy basic demands of the majority of people in the underdeveloped South.

GRANMA cites international statistics that depict the terrible situation of 570 million people facing chronic hunger worldwide and 201 million people who are suffering from malnutrition.

A 1993 UN report reveals that in the past 30 years the disparity between the developed world and the Third World has doubled.

In addressing the issue of the differences between the United States and Cuba, GRANMA reports that the U.S. economic blockade on the island cost the island about $2 billion from 1990 to 1993 alone, and it notes that 50 percent of this loss was caused by the implementation of the Torricelli Law.

GRANMA concludes by reporting that the United States now has the best opportunity ever to definitely resolve

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the exodus of Cubans to Florida because the roots of this problem have nothing to do with the problems of millions of emigrants from other countries who leave in search of a better life.

Some 50 People on Hunger Strike Near U.S. Interests Section

PA0209192494 Paris AFP in Spanish 1821 GMT 2 Sep 94

[By Francis Kohn, special AFP correspondent]

[Text] Havana, 2 Sep (AFP)—Some 50 Cubans who claim to be former political prisoners are on a hunger strike in Havana today to protest the U.S. refusal to grant them a visa. According to U.S. sources, this is not as "spontaneous" an action as the strikers claim.

Some 10 people began the strike on Monday, stationing themselves on a corner of the Park of Laments, some 50 meters from the building that houses the U.S. Interests Section.

Other people joined in the protest, and by Friday there were 56 people, including six women, on strike. The majority are resting on thin mattresses in an area cordoned off by a ribbon and a row of bicycles. All claim they are determined to go to the "final consequences, even death" to get their wish.

The strikers say the United States has turned them down when it should have granted them visas within the framework of the agreements signed by Havana and Washington in 1984. This agreement reserves up to 3,000 visas per year for Cubans who are victims of political or religious persecution.

Since the rafters crisis began, Cuba has insisted that one of the factors causing the illegal emigration is the fact that Washington has not complied with the 1984 agreements and is granting visas through an eye dropper.

According to U.S. diplomatic sources accredited in Havana who chose to remain anonymous, the majority of the strikers have reportedly been sentenced for illegal emigration and, consequently, cannot be considered political prisoners.

"There are indications that this movement is not spontaneous," the same sources stated without going into detail.

Cuban Foreign Ministry spokesman Miguel Alfonso said on Thursday that these people "did not receive an adequate reply" to their visa requests, which in some cases "go back more than 10 years."

"We hope to receive a satisfactory reply to our right to migrate," Andres Bull said. He and the other strikers say the Cuban authorities have them on record as "enemies of the revolution." He carries with him court documents which seem to confirm this.

"I was not, am not, and will never be with the revolution," Mario Duran said. He states that he was held prisoner for 15 years, two of them secretly and without seeing daylight, for having participated in an armed rebellion in the 1960's.

The strikers distributed a communique with a complete list of the 56 former prisoners. They say they are "desperate" because of the attitude of the U.S. Interests Section, which in some cases rejected their requests and in others has delayed them for years.

"We are all political; there are no thieves, criminals, or drug addicts," Mario Duran said.

On Friday a woman became ill and had to be given medical attention, AFP verified. The strikers say they are only drinking water, coffee, or tea.

The police presence is discreet. According to the demonstrators, a lieutenant colonel came to tell them on Wednesday that they should leave the site quickly because they had "fulfilled their objective."

Further on Hunger Strikers

PA0309000594 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2032 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Excerpt] Havana, 2 Sep, (DPA)—More than 50 former Cuban political prisoners in Havana today spent a third day on a hunger strike to demand visas from the U.S. Government. According to the group's spokesman, the 50 men and six women have yet to receive a reply from Washington's Interests Section in Havana.

"An official from that legation came on Tuesday, took note of our petition, and promised a reply in 24 hours," the spokesman who requested anonymity told DPA.

The strikers are in the parking lot of a funeral home less than 20 meters from the U.S. legation, where hundreds of Cubans form long lines every day to await visas to emigrate or visit relatives in the United States.

The source, who is about 40 years old and claimed to have served five years in prison for political reasons, said the group decided to go on a hunger strike because of the long wait with no reply.

"It is a right that we have, which was established in the migratory agreement signed by the United States and Cuba in 1984," the spokesman said, recalling that Washington pledged in this document to take in at least 3,000 former Cuban political prisoners and their relatives annually.

The spokesman said the former prisoners who have pledged to continue fasting served time for political activities—officially, activities deemed to threaten state security—in the 1960's and 1970's, and they have requested the corresponding visas to emigrate. [passage omitted]

Miami Anti-Embargo Magazine Building Bombed

FL0509231694 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1927 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] In Miami, unidentified individuals threw two molotov cocktails at the building housing the magazine

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REPLICA. This magazine advocates improving ties with Cuba and has been published in Miami since 1967. Max Lesnick, editor of REPLICA, stated: This act is the reaction of an irrational beast, in conflict with reason and intelligence.

The event coincides with talks between Cuban and United States representatives in Washington [as heard]. Max Lesnick is an outspoken advocate of improving relations between Cuba and the United States and lifting the U.S. blockade. In 1990, a bomb partially damaged the Cuban Arts and Culture Museum which was exhibiting works by Cuban artists.

The molotov cocktails at REPLICA caused only minor damage.

Robaina Meets With Costa Rican President Figueres

FL0209190694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres welcomed Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina at San Jose's International Airport. Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo was also present. At this very moment, Robaina is holding private meetings with Figueres. Costa Rica is the seventh [as heard] stop of Robaina's Latin American tour, during which he has met with six presidents. In such a difficult time when many people maintain that Cuba is isolated, the establishment of better diplomatic relations with Latin American countries is considered a great success, which also brings Latin America integration one step closer.

This afternoon, Robaina will visit Honduras at the official invitation of President Carlos Roberto Reina. Honduras and Cuba do not have diplomatic or consular relations and this is the first visit by a high level Cuban official to the Central American nation.

Costa Rica Sees U.S. 'Displeasure' With Robaina Visit

PA0309043194 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0349 GMT 3 Sep 94

[By Rafael A. Ugalde]

[Text] San Jose, 3 Sep (PL)—Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina today concludes in Honduras a two-week tour through various Latin American countries.

The tour, which the foreign minister termed as highly positive, began on 18 August and included Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Brazil, Panama, Costa Rica, and Honduras.

Costa Rican President Jose Figueres, who met with Robaina on Friday for more than two hours, told PRENSA LATINA he had personally invited the foreign minister to visit.

The issue of the U.S. economic blockade against the Cuban people was foremost in Robaina's talks with high-ranking government officials in the countries he visited.

He said the Cubans' illegal departure toward the United States is mainly a result of the blockade the White House stubbornly enforces against the people of the largest Antillean island.

A suspension of the blockade would not resolve all of the problems in Cuba, but it would ease the situation, he added.

A Costa Rican Foreign Ministry source who asked to remain anonymous said Figueres' unexpected invitation to Robaina caused "displeasure" in Bill Clinton's administration.

"Better yet, it increased the displeasure, because before the Cuban foreign minister's visit, Secretary of State Warren Christopher 'exerted pressure' on us to receive rafters who illegally leave Cuba, but we opposed this," the source said.

Costa Rica's Figueres Cited on Talks With Robaina

PA0309154494 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2203 GMT 2 Aug 94

[By Rafael A. Ugalde: "President Figueres Advocates Broadening Immigration Talks"]

[Text] San Jose, 2 Sep (PL)—Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres said today "restricting the dialogue between Cuba and the United States to immigration matters is ignoring reality and the consequences of the blockade."

Figueres met with Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina for more than two hours here to review bilateral matters, including the possibility of establishing an interests section in Havana as well as current immigration problems in Cuba.

Figueres told PRENSA LATINA during a news conference with more than 50 local and foreign journalists that nonintervention should prevail within the Latin American family.

"It is clear to us the Cuban family and no one else should solely and exclusively handle the Cuban problem," Figueres said, rejecting violence as a means to solve the difficult social and economic problems in the region.

Precisely because we respect Cuban affairs, we have decided to receive Cubans who leave that country legally, as long as their relatives here take care of their needs and pay their transportation to San Jose, Figueres added.

He also stressed the respect that should exist when discussing internal affairs of Latin American nations,

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and he expressed his hope the new OAS secretary general, former Colombian President Cesar Gaviria, will seek solutions for Cuba based on dialogue.

He described his talks with Robaina as sincere and frank. Robaina arrived from Panama as part of a tour of Ecuador, Chile, Brazil, and Bolivia that will end in Honduras tomorrow.

Figueres, accompanied by Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo, said: We learned of Cuba's advancements in education, health, and housing, while we told our Cuban visitor about our experience with a mixed economy and how our democratic system has developed.

Robaina Continues 'Successful' Latin American Tour

FL0209162894 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1402 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] The Ministry of Foreign Relations [MINREX] confirmed that Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina will make brief visits to Costa Rica and Honduras as part of his tour of Latin America. Robaina headed the delegation from our country that attended Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares's inaugural ceremony.

Today Robaina will travel to San Jose, Costa Rica, and will later travel to Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The two visits will be official because they respond to invitations of the respective governments. With these visits the tour will have included seven countries rather than six as was originally planned. Robaina and his delegation have visited Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Brazil, and Panama.

On 1 September, MINREX spokesman Miguel Alfonso described Robaina's tour as very successful. In his customary meeting with the national and foreign press, Alfonso added that the success of this tour is evident in the political results and the cooperation and trade agreements signed.

Upon his return from his Latin American tour, Robaina will remain in Cuba for a few days before travelling to Spain later on 6 September for an official visit. Since his appointment as foreign minister in April 1993, Robaina has visited Latin America twice and has toured Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Robaina Calls Central American Tour 'Very Positive'

PA0309012194 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2236 GMT 2 Sep 94

[By Rafael A. Ugalde]

[Text] San Jose, 2 Sep (PL)—Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said in this capital today that his tour to several Latin American countries, which will end in Honduras tomorrow, has been very positive.

Cuba has given its version and elevated its voice to confront those who want to distort the problem of the illegal departure of Cubans, Robaina told PRENSA LATINA when he was asked to appraise his visits to Panama, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Brazil.

Robaina met with Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres, Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo, and more than 50 local and foreign reporters at the Juan Santamaria Airport's diplomatic room today.

We have talked sincerely about our problems and our countries, and the balance has been very positive, he added a few minutes before leaving for Tegucigalpa, where he is to attend several meetings with Honduran President Carlos Alberto Reina and his foreign minister, Ernesto Paz Aguilar.

The Cuban foreign minister highlighted Costa Rica's endeavors to establish an interests office in Havana.

The Costa Rican representation, proposed by the Figueres administration, would temporarily be in charge of attending to the legal immigration of Cubans who have relatives in this country, and who would pay for their transportation to and living expenses in San Jose.

"It is premature to talk abut diplomatic relations, but this is an important step in that direction," Robaina observed.

Robaina noted that the illegal departure of Cubans is mainly a consequence of the harsh U.S. economic blockade.

Robaina Returns to Havana; Leaves for Spain 5 Sep

PA0409135894 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1302 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina has arrived in Havana from Tegucigalpa, capital of Honduras, which was the final leg of his tour of several Central and South American countries.

Robaina travels to Madrid, Spain on Monday for an official visit that will conclude on 13 September.

During his recently concluded tour, the Cuban foreign minister visited Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Brazil, Panama, Costa Rica and Honduras; one of his goals was to provide information about his country's reality.

Visit to Spain Previewed

PA0609005894 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2146 GMT 5 Sep 94

[By Nancy Zamora]

[Text] Madrid, 5 Sep (PL)—Amid great expectations, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina will arrive tomorrow in Madrid on his first official visit to Spain in the past decade.

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This will also be Robaina's first visit to a West European country since he took charge of the Foreign Ministry in April 1993. During his stay, he will have a busy work schedule, which includes high-level contacts with the Spanish Government and business sector.

Robaina will remain in Spain until 9 September. His agenda includes a visit to Las Palmas at the invitation of the Government of the Canary Islands Archipelago.

The visit by the Cuban foreign minister to this country has given rise to great expectations in political and press circles, in view of the difficult situation that exists in Cuba, as has been reported at length by the Spanish press and television newcasts throughout the month of August.

On the eve of the Cuban foreign minister's visit, Cuban Ambassador to Spain Rosario Navas Morata reviewed Spanish-Cuban relations with PRENSA LATINA.

She noted the positive development of bilateral ties in political, cultural, economic, and scientific cooperation, as evidenced during the recent visit to Cuba by Spanish Culture Minister Carmen Alborch and during the meeting of the joint economic-industrial commission.

Navas Morata noted that the Spanish Government maintains "a constructive position of respect for Cuban problems, with a deep humanitarian sense, in favor of maintaining assistance to the island in the current circumstances."

In recent statements to local newsmen, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez reiterated his rejection of the U.S. blockade and came out against the break of relations with the Cuban Government.

In the opinion of the Cuban ambassador, Robaina's visit, which was agreed upon by both countries several months ago, will provide an opportunity for the Cuban foreign minister to explain the Cuban-U.S. conflict.

During his stay in Madrid, Robaina will receive a special audience with King Juan Carlos. He will also meet with Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, Foreign Minister Javier Solana, and parliamentary leaders.

He will also give a lecture on Cuba's foreign policy at the Casa de America culture center, where he will unveil a plaque in tribute to Jose Marti in the room named after the Cuban national hero.

He will also hold a meeting with the Cuban community in Spain, second in size after the one in the United States, which—the Cuban ambassador noted—demonstrates Havana's interest in maintaining ties with that community.

This will be the first meeting of its type held in Spain, and aspects of immigration and family reunification will be broached, it was learned.

The meeting with Spanish businessmen will take place in the Madrid Chamber of Commerce, which will serve as an opportunity to inform participants about the possibilities of increasing their presence in sectors as attractive as textiles, mining, and metallurgy in Cuba.

Nongovernmental organizations and solidarity organizations have organized a large ceremony in the theater of the Workers Commission, one of the country's two prinicipal labor organizations, to demonstrate to visitors their support for Cuba.

Robaina's schedule includes several meetings with newsmen, including exclusive interviews, a breakfast meeting at the Foreign Press Club accredited in Madrid, and a meeting with newsmen at the end of his visit.

Robaina Reviews Latin American Interest in Investments

FL0209173994 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Report by Zenaida Costales, in Panama; from the "Doing Radio" program]

[Text] After having attended the inauguration of the new president of Panama, Ernesto Perez Balladares, Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina will visit Costa Rica at the official invitation of Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres. Robaina interrupted a trip through South American nations, for example Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, and Brazil, to attend Balladares inauguration. In recent statements to the press Robaina evaluated the significance of the trip.

[Begin Robaina recording] I believe that in many of the countries we visited, it was an issue of the continuity of established projects. In addition to the previously established agreements between Ecuador and Havana, we have signed new agreements in other areas of Cuban-Ecuadorian relations creating commercial relationships with Ecuador, and also Brazil. We are finalizing agreements with Bolivia also, and Chile has a lot to offer. I think, above all, Latin America continues to demonstrate great interest in the possibility of Cuba opening to foreign investment. We have stressed that we are open to the world, and particularly Latin America. Latin American nations are truly interested in this opening and are seeking specific opportunities in which to participate. Almost all the countries, Bolivia and Ecuador for example, are very interested in medical, biotechnological, and pharmaceutical products and continue to seek the possibility of mutually beneficial cooperation in those areas where Cuba has been successful. [end recording]

Cuba's economic opening to foreign investment is sparking the commercial interest of Latin American nations who recognize a real possibility of investment in Cuba.

Matanzas APPP President Released From Post

FL0309014294 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 2 Sep 94

[From the "Exclusive" program]

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[Text] The Provincial Assembly of the People's Government [APPP] in Matanzas has voted to release Osvaldo Umpierrez Suarez, at his own request, from his duties as president of the APPP.

The national press agency advises that Umpierrez had stated that during his three years as president, notwithstanding his efforts, he had not achieved the progress in all tasks with the efficiency needed by Cuba. The APPP unanimously recognized Umpierrez' work for the Revolution and convened the electoral commission to elect a new president. This will take place on 7 September.

Matanzas PCC Committee Reshuffles Officials

FL0309153994 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Report by Matanzas correspondent Manolo Garcia; from the "Doing Radio" program]

[Text] In a special plenum, the provincial committee of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] announced changes in the provincial administrative and political leadership at several levels aimed at reinforcing the struggle and continuing to solve Cuba's current problems. To that end it was agreed that Ramon Rodriguez Perez, member of the Matanzas executive bureau of the PCC committee, be relieved of his duties and assigned to other administrative duties.

Comrade Eulalio Vasquez Ponsada, first secretary of the PCC in Matanzas Municipality, was appointed to the construction, transportation, and communications affairs post in the provincial bureau.

Likewise, Gabriel Alquizar Rojos, was appointed first secretary of the PCC in Matanzas Municipality and a nonstaff member of the provincial bureau. He was the provincial coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution [CDR]. It was also announced that Julio Betancourt Caballero, a current member of the provincial committee of the PCC, was promoted to the CDR coordinator post.

Granma APPP Officials Replaced, Sent to 'Agricultural Contingent'

FL0609014894 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 Sep 94

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[Text] The 7th Special Session of the Provincial Assembly of the People's Government in Granma decided to relieve Guillermo Rodriguez Quesada of his post as vice president for the province. He was replaced by Antonio de Jesus Infante, who was president of the Assembly in the Media Luna Municipality.

In addition, the Provincial Assembly decided to release Iran Casali Ramirez and Juan Sierra Correa, vice presidents of the Administrative Council from their posts, due to mistakes in the execution of their duties.

During the session chaired by Jose Ramon Balaguer, Politburo member and Granma delegate, it was pointed out that the three comrades will go to work as part of an agricultural contingent.

GRANMA Says Government Defending Sovereignty Over Airwaves

PA0309145894 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0958 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Text] Havana, 3 Sep (PL)—The newspaper GRANMA states today Cuba is right in defending its sovereignty over its airwaves with the same determination it uses to defend the sovereignty of its territory, seas, and national airspace.

The newspaper stated in a commentary the island is taking defensive measures based on international law to jam the anti-Cuban television transmissions and to block medium wave transmissions, which the United States has increased in the last few days with the addition of new frequencies, the extension of broadcast hours, the use of new equipment, and even threats of using planes.

Radio broadcasts to Cuba, it states, are not new, original, or even illegitimate. What makes the U.S. broadcasts unacceptable are the intentions, volume, illegitimacy, absence of all ethics, and, especially, the impossibility of making them reciprocal, all of which are factors that make those broadcasts an abusive act of force, the newspaper states.

In making an analysis of the problem, the newspaper states radio broadcasts between one country to another do exist. They are authorized and regulated by international law and are completely acceptable for Cuba.

"We have nothing against the dozens of foreign radio stations that are heard in our country; we have nothing against them, and we are not complaining," the newspaper states, citing Radio France, London's BBC, Radio Netherlands, the Voice of Israel, Radio Exterior de Espana, and the Voice of America, which have an acceptable audience in Cuba.

The U.S. radio aggression against Cuba is quite a different matter. We are not talking about a debate on the freedom of speech or the free circulation of ideas; it is a debate, however, about Cuba's sovereignty, the newspaper states.

It added in this regard that Washington's radio broadcasts toward the island are a political recourse, and they are an instrument of aggression due to their design and use.

The conflict is not related to freedom of speech but, rather, to freedom itself. It is especially a matter of sovereignty and national dignity, the newspaper adds.

According to the author of the commentary, the U.S. Government is acting based on its strength, and it reaches delirious extremes in its arrogance when one of

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its stations alone, the so-called Radio Marti, uses 26 shortwave and medium wave frequencies against Cuba.

It does not have the right to take over a television channel registered by Cuba in order to make medium wave transmissions to our country or to invade the amateur radio band with pirate transmissions.

Note Protests U.S. 'Violation' of Telecommunications Laws

PA0309164294 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1426 GMT 3 Sep 94

[PRENSA LATINA headline: "Cuba Accuses the United States of Violating Telecommunications Laws"]

[Text] Havana, 3 Sep (PL)—Cuba accused the United States today of incurring a serious violation of international telecommunications laws by using stations and radio frequencies designated for local services to transmit to the island.

A note from the Center Against Radio and Television Broadcast Aggression stated "the ill-named Radio Marti recently adopted the practice of using frequencies and technical facilities of commercial stations in Miami during specific hours." This action corroborates Cuba's constant protests that certain commercial stations in southern Florida having registered frequencies to offer services in the area are operating with more power and at higher standards than necessary, the note stated. In addition, the note confirms those stations are transmitting to Cuba.

This is the second time in the past four days Cuba has protested the radio and television transmissions to Cuba.

A note from the same center on 31 August protested the intensification of radio and television attacks from the United States and reaffirmed Cuba's determination to defend its sovereignty over its national electromagnetic spectrum.

GRANMA published a commentary today in that regard stating Cuba has a right to defend its sovereignty over its electromagnetic spectrum with the same determination it uses to defend its territory, seas, and airspace.

"We have nothing against the dozens of foreign stations that can be heard in our country; we have nothing against them, and we would gain nothing [words indistinct] London's BBC, Radio Netherlands, the Voice of Israel, Radio Spain, and the Voice of America, which have an acceptable Cuban audience. [no closing quotation mark as received]

The U.S. radio attacks against Cuba are another matter. It is not a debate on freedom of information or the free circulation of ideas; it is a debate about Cuba's sovereignty, the note stated.

The note added Washington's radio transmissions to the island are a political recourse and, based on its design and utilization, an instrument of aggression.

The conflict in this controversy is unrelated to freedom of information but, rather, to freedom itself. It is a matter of sovereignty and national dignity more than anything else, the note concluded.

Organization Protests Radio Marti 'Aggression' Against Cuba

FL0309180394 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 3 Sep 94

["Note" from the Center Against Radio and Television Aggression; from the "National Radio News"]

[Text] The Center Against Radio and Television Aggression announced that recently the ill-named Radio Marti has begun using the frequencies and equipment of Miami commercial stations during certain hours. This proves the reiterated denunciation by Cuba that certain commercial stations in South Florida—registered to serve that region—use power levels and antenna patterns much higher and wider than necessary, making it obvious they are aimed at Cuba. By using stations and frequencies assigned to local broadcasting to broadcast to Cuba, the U.S. Government is incurring a serious violation of international telecommunications laws, and in fact, is increasing its radio aggression against Cuba.

Only Defenders of Revolution Admitted to Universities

PA0509195794 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1820 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Havana, 5 Sep (NOTIMEX)—Only young people willing "to defend the revolution's ideas on the streets" will be admitted to universities in Cuba, Minister of Higher Education Fernando Vecino Alegret said today.

"Although sometimes there is inattentiveness to this point, it is a principle we will not surrender," the official declared on Monday to TRABAJADORES weekly, the official mouthpiece of the island's labor unions.

"Yes," Vecino Alegret replied curtly when the daily asked whether universities will only accept young people who share the government's ideology. "If we look at it from another point of view, it means that the students should not be opposed to the revolution," he commented.

"It is not a matter of demanding political militancy. Instead, it should be a person who is committed in his studies, who is honest beyond question, who has a clear concept of the nation's problems," he added.

The minister of higher education explained that foreigners with scholarships will not have to meet the same requirement, "but they must respect the revolution's work, traditions, and ideology."

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Vecino Alegret also confirmed to TRABAJADORES that since the 1986-87 school year, the authorities have seen a decline in registration at Cuban universities, which this year only admitted 150,000 students, as opposed to 310,000 in 1986.

"In Cuba, the goal is to guarantee work for all those who graduate from daytime classes, and in keeping with this, the enrollments are determined," the official indicated.

He confirmed that enrollments will continue to be conditioned on the capacity to offer students jobs amid the current economic crisis, while he indicated that "the number of registered students should still be reduced a little more."

According to Vecino Alegret, Cuba already has 500,000 graduated professionals, and to the extent that the economy picks up, the number of registered students will be increased in keeping with the demand.

Tourism sector sources confirmed to NOTIMEX that numerous professors and graduates are looking to obtain jobs in this industry, which is experiencing a boom and bringing in dollars.

The official indicated that 80 percent of those graduated from the tourism course are working and that the government will prevent "this highly qualified work force from being lost because it is one of the riches the nation depends on."

During the extensive interview, Vecino Alegret said universities on the island support more than 10 programs that coincide with priorities in the food, electric power, tourist, biotechnology, and defense sectors.

He praised the "political and moral state" of the universities and the professors and students who participated on 5 August, together with the police, in dispersing a group of protesters along the avenue that borders Havana Bay.

Fidel Castro Congratulates New Mexican President

FL0209120294 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 2 Sep 94

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[Text] Cuban President Fidel Castro has congratulated Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon on his recent Mexican election victory and wished him success in leading Mexico. Castro congratulated Zedillo in his name and in the name of the Cuban people in a letter in which he reiterated his wishes of welfare to Mexico, a nation which Cubans are grateful to for its traditional and steadfast solidarity. Ernesto Zedillo, nominated by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, won the presidential election on 21 August. Congress must endorse the election results in November. Zedillo will assume the Presidency on 1 December for a period of six years, to end in the year 2000.

Roundup of Economic Developments

PA2408222394

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic developments monitored through 30 August.

The weekly GRANMA International has reported that Cuba registered record oil production of 600,000 tons during the first semester of 1994. Oil production for 1994 is estimated at 1,200,000 tons, the highest since oil extraction began in 1981. More than 20 oil fields have been found in Cuba. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0100 GMT 18 Aug 94)

Santiago de Cuba Province work brigades have planted over 100 caballerias of plantains and other crops in Ciego de Avila Province. Another 125 caballerias will be planted. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 20 Aug 94)

Nearly 90 percent of Las Tunas Province's sugarcane fields have been weeded. Workers weeded 31,500 caballerias by machine and with chemicals and 19,000 caballerias by hand. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1403 GMT 26 Aug 94)

A total of 86 percent of the winter sugarcane planting goal has been met in Santiago de Cuba Province. The planting goal is 340 caballerias. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 29 Aug 94)

Workers who produce black tobacco in Villa Clara have signed a contract for sales of the product with the Cubatabaco enterprise to reactivate that sector of exploitation in the next harvest. Approximately 5,000 peasants in Camajuani and Manicaragua will work the 190 caballerias of tobacco with foreign financing to obtain supplies. The contract is backed by Spain's Tabacalera, S.A., firm. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 26 Aug 94)

In Cienfuegos, the main branch of Abatour, a supply company for the tourist industry, has had positive economic results after only two months of operation. The company's gross income totaled more than 720,000 pesos by the end of July. The company supplies tourist facilities in Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus, and Cienfuegos Provinces and employs 70 workers at the main branch in Cienfuegos. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 20 Aug 94)

The Santa Lucia tourist complex, in Camaguey Province, accrued over $12 million in revenues during the first half of 1994, exceeding their goals and increasing revenues by $6 million over the same period for 1993. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 23 Aug 94)

The El Jarey tourist complex, in Granma Province, has earned over $103,000 so far this year, $20,000 more than this year's estimated goal. The complex employs 21

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workers. (Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish and Cuba Vision 0000 GMT 30 Aug 94)

Workers at the Santiago de Cuba Hotel have collected more than $3 million so far this year. The 343 workers made the hotel one of the Cubanacan enterprise's most efficient hotels. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 23 Aug 94)

The Fantastic travel agency, in Santiago de Cuba, accrued over $1 million in revenues during the first semester of 1994, twice the earnings of the same period for 1993. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1956 GMT 30 Aug 94)

Havana City will benefit from six new vehicles to be used to deliver mail to the main processing facilities. Communiations Vice Minister Reynaldo Gonzalez has said that some Havana City postmen have been issued bicycles and that security measures have been taken to prevent mail from being stolen. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 29 Aug 94)

A new, ecologically safe refrigerant gas has been developed and experimentally used by scientists in Santiago de Cuba. The gas will replace freon-12 in refrigeration systems and will be tried next in Guantanamo, Granma, and Holguin Provinces. It could be a new source of revenue if exported. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1953 GMT 28 Aug 94)

The National Bus Company transported over 5.5 million passengers during the first six months of 1994. Nicolas Alberto Cilgado, the company's deputy economic director, has said that the company is self-sufficient and has obtained over 2 million pesos in benefits. The company has 360 buses transporting passengers. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 30 Aug 94)

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

UN/OAS Official Says Haitian Military 'Playing for Time'

FL0309145694 Castries HTS Caribvision Television in English 1945 GMT 2 Sep 94

[From the "Caribbean Evening News" program]

[Text] The head of the United Nations/Organization of American States [mission] to Haiti, Colin Granderson, is hoping for a peaceful resolution to the political crisis in Haiti. Mr. Granderson is visiting Trinidad, and was awarded the (Chacunia) Medal for his work in Haiti. In an interview he said the military rulers in Haiti seem to believe that time is still on their side. But Mr. Granderson feels that with the tightening up of economic sanctions and the threat of a military intervention looming, General Cedras and his followers could be persuaded that the international community is serious about restoring democracy in Haiti. Nicole Huggins has this report:

[Begin recording] [Huggins] The head of the international civilian mission to Haiti, Colin Granderson, says an armed intervention is the last recourse. But the problem is that Haiti's military government has been unwilling to believe that the international community is willing to use force.

[Granderson, in progress]...not believing that it will take place, the thing that so far they have been able to spin this crisis out for almost three years, and it will take only one more year before the end of the mandate of President Aristide. So they are playing for time, they have always been playing for time.

If the sanctions work, one would not have need to go [rephrases] to have the recourse to the use of force. And that is to be said clearly. But at the same time the very strong language has been made that the military have to step down, the international community has made this very clear, and it is going to happen.

[Huggins] Mr. Granderson says that during his two years in Haiti he has detected a sense of disillusionment among the people, particularly after the failure of the Governors Island accord. But he says the continued acts of repression alone are a sign that passive resistance continues. And despite their pride in Haiti's revolutionary history, the Haitian people may be ready to welcome an invading force, albeit grudgingly.

[Granderson] I don't think the Haitians really want a recourse to force, but at the same time they seem to have got to the point where they are willing to say yes, we want to get these military off our backs, we want to be able to go back to a normal situation, we want to be able to live in a situation of security, of physical security. And if the only way to do it is to have a multilateral force come into the country and get rid of the military, so be it. I think they have got to that point.

[Huggins] Caricom [Caribbean Community] has worked to keep Haiti in the international spotlight. And the region has pledged assistance in any post-invasion effort. But this is not likely to be an easy task.

[Granderson] You have the institutional reform, one has to get the economy back on its feet, one has to look at the infrastructure; it's going to be a long-term project.

[Huggins] For now Colin Granderson and a core group from the international mission are stationed in the Dominican Republic writing their final report. The military government ordered the mission out of Haiti in July this year. [end recording]

Antigua and Barbuda

Government Prepared To Join Multinational Force in Haiti

PA0209233494 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2225 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] St. John's, Antigua, 2 Sep (DPA)—The Antigua and Barbuda Government announced today that it is

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"prepared to assume its role" and join the multinational force that is being organized to guarantee the return of Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to his post and remove the military dictatorship.

A statement by the Ministry of External Affairs released today says: "Antigua and Barbuda agrees that the UN Security Council is the appropriate organization to decide when a threat to international peace exists and what measures should be taken to face the threat."

With this decision, Antigua and Barbuda joins Jamaica, Barbados, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago as those members of the Caribbean Common Market (Caricom) "that have agreed to join the multinational force," the statement says. The statement also stresses that the government "decided to emphasize that the operation is designed to maintain peace and start reconstruction."

According to the statement, a Defense Force contingent should begin training soon, together with forces from other countries, it was said.

The statement adds that the Antigua and Barbuda Government "intends to send members of its police force to take part in the multinational UN observer group that supervises compliance of UN sanctions against Haiti."

In statements to the CANA news agency, Colin Murdoch, spokesman for the External Affairs Ministry, said Antigua and Barbuda considers the action planned by the international community as legitimate.

Dominican Republic

Vice President Supports Peaceful Resolution of Haiti Crisis

PA0209172294 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 2 Sep 94 p 14

[Article by Veronica L. Tamayo]

[Text] Dominican Vice President Carlos Morales Troncoso has said that the Haitian crisis should be resolved by peaceful and democratic means, and that is what is being attempted through all possible mechanisms so the crisis can be resolved once and for all.

Morales Troncoso pointed out that the United Nations and other international organizations have repeatedly tried to convince the Haitian military officers that their time is up and that democracy should be installed in Haiti as soon as possible.

The Dominican Vice President also spoke about the Haitian refugees. He said there are large numbers of Haitians in his country, and if more were accepted, his country would be unable to provide for them. He added, however, that President Joaquin Balaguer will decided whether to accept or reject the Haitian brothers.

Dominican Vice President Carlos Morales Troncoso said the most advisable thing at this point is not to invade Haiti because his country's economy, trade, and tourism would be adversely affected.

Military Reinforces Haitian Border Near Dajabon

PA0209232194 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2124 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Santo Domingo, 2 Sep (EFE)—A new contingent of soldiers was deployed today along the border with Haiti to reinforce the Dominican soldiers guarding the area to ensure that the UN embargo against the coupist military leaders is respected.

The new chief of military operations along the border, Rear Admiral Camilo Nazir Tejada, today said the new contingent comprises 120 Dominican Army, Air Force, and Navy cadets. The cadets were sent from Santo Domingo to Dajabon, a city located on the Haitian border in the northwestern area of the nation.

The reinforcements arrived 48 hours after U.S. Colonel William MacDough, head of the Multinational Group of Observers (GMO), said the area of Dajabon was the weakest point in overseeing the embargo against Haiti.

Nazir Tejada is replacing Rear Admiral Ruben Paulino Alvarez as chief of military operations along the border. Rear Adm. Alvarez today denied that the Dominican Republic will be used as a staging area for an invasion against Haiti.

Alvarez recalled that the Dominican Government has reiterated that Dominican soldiers will not participate in a multinational force to invade Haiti and overthrow Haiti's General Raoul Cedras, the defense minister, and other coupist officers to reinstate President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Balaguer Confirms Term; No Comment on Meeting With Talbott

PA0209143994 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2302 GMT 1 Sep 94

[Text] Santo Domingo, 1 Sep (EFE)—Dominican President Joaquin Balaguer today confirmed he will stay in power for two years in keeping with the "Pact for Democracy" that he and the opposition signed to end the political crisis triggered after he was accused of winning the May elections fraudulently.

"We signed this pact in good faith, as I said at a meeting we held with all opposition leaders, and I will comply with the agreement thoroughly and steadfastly. There is no doubt about this," Balaguer said after opening a school in Duverge, a southwestern city near Haiti.

The opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) and its presidential candidate, Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, accused Balaguer, the Central Electoral Board, and the ruling Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC) of committing fraud in the 16 May elections, which Balaguer won by 22,000 votes.

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In view of national and international pressure, Balaguer signed a pact with the opposition, guaranteeing that he will remain in power for only two years until new elections, scheduled for 16 May 1996, are organized. He guaranteed that he will not participate in these elections.

However, Pena Gomez is demanding a new Constituent Assembly meeting to ensure that the Balaguer government last only 18 months from the period beginning 16 August, as Pena Gomez and the chief of state agreed before the Congress decided to extend Balaguer's term to two years.

According to information provided by the National Palace Press Office, it was reported that Balaguer refused to disclose the issues he discussed with Strobe Talbott and John Deutch, U.S. deputy state and defense secretaries, respectively, last week at the National Palace. He admitted, however, it was a "confidential and secret" meeting where the Haitian crisis was discussed.

Haiti

Foreign Minister Denies Government Role in Assassination

FL0209223794 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Report on news conference by Foreign Affairs Minister Charles David in Port-au-Prince on 1 September; passages in italics in Creole]

[Text] The minister of foreign affairs of the Emile Jonassaint government, Charles David, yesterday categorically denied in Port-au-Prince any involvement with the Army in the murder of Father Jean-Marie Vincent, who was close to President-in-Exile Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Certain dishonest people would like to believe that we spend our time in Council of Ministers meetings planning assassinations, the minister indignantly stated during a news conference at the Haitian Chancery on 1 September. He added that at each crossroads in the history of this country, there have been assassinations, citing the murders of Antoine Izmery and former Justice Minister Francois Guy Malary. Now that the threat of war was fading, he noted, we found ourselves with the murder of Father Jean-Marie Vincent. Do they take us for fools, morons, when they intimate that we could hit such personalities? What would the Army or government have to gain by these assassinations of well-known personalities? The minister said he was amazed that the murder was immediately exploited to promote an invasion, adding that its exploitation was even more monstrous than the monstrous assassination. Those who killed Father Vincent knew exactly what they were doing—that is, striking a blow at this country, wielding the threat of military invasion to drive out the military in power. Some Caribbean countries, he added, have forgotten that their histories embarked—for farthings—on an adventure they believed glorious. He warned that nobody should doubt Haitian willingness to stand up for defense of the country. Haitians he said, would rather stand and die than hold out their bowl to beg for dollars.

The minister further keenly denied that responsibility for failure of the latest UN mission was the fault of the military regime, as UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali asserted. He said there had been no direct or indirect contacts with civilian or military Haitian authorities, and he challenged anybody in the international community to prove otherwise. At a moment when this government tries to manage the genocide imposed on us, there are certain dishonest people who wish to make the victim the guilty party. The following is a report by Jacques Maurice.

[Begin recording] [Maurice] *I do not intend to negotiate this afternoon; I want to talk; I am asking for dialogue. Those were statements by Charles David, foreign minister of the Jonassaint government. During a news conference on Thursday afternoon, 1 September, David requested a chance for the government to tell the international community what it thinks. The minister forcefully condemns the threats of foreign military intervention in Haiti, but realizes it is getting closer and closer everyday.*

[David] I make it a point to explain that Haiti is not at war with anybody, that Haiti does not threaten anybody, and that since UN Security Council Resolution 940 was voted, serious threats have been weighing down the existence of this nation. Our determination to stand up for our defense should not be doubted. Obviously, we do not have military power, and we are subjected to an economic embargo. So everday, they have provoked us.

[Maurice] *On 31 July, the UN Security Council had authorized the United States to invade Haiti to force the authors of the coup d'etat to step down. Minister David said that the government has resisted the intervention despite the embargo and provocations. By way of evidence, the minister criticized the fact that a U.S. warship was moving in Cap-Haitien seas under the pretext that the Marines were looking for lobsters. Minister David cannot understand why the international community calls the government intransigent. The reason was that he had personally written the United Nations a letter asking that he be allowed to speak, but that this letter was never answered. General Cedras also requested the right to speak before the United Nations tribunal under the consensus government. David stated that the general will no longer be speaking because there is a government. So it is up to the government alone to speak. Even though things are hard, the Jonassaint government does not want to present its bowl to friends, begging for charity, and prefers to stand and die in its country.*

[David] I do not know if history will remember our weakness or our pride. But everybody should know that this country prefers to stand and die rather than hold its bowl out to beg for dollars.

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[Maurice] *Meanwhile, the Vatican wheat will certainly arrive at the end of the month of September, according to the minister, who does not conceal his numerous contacts with other countries, other embassies, other foreign ministers such as himself, even though they refuse to recognize his government. On the morning of 1 September, the minister spoke to Venezuelan officials about his health, which is not quite fine. [sentence as heard] This is the second statement by the minister this week. Jacques Maurice for Signal FM.* [end recording]

Bishops Attend Vincent's Funeral in 'Rare Show' of Unity

PA0209203394 Paris AFP in Spanish 1922 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 2 Sep (AFP)—Approximately 2,000 people, mostly members of the religious community, attended on Friday in Port-au-Prince the funeral of Father Jean-Marie Vincent, a close associate of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Vincent was murdered on Sunday.

The religious ceremony, which was held in an intensely sad and emotional atmosphere, took place on the patio of the motherhouse of the religious order to which the victim belonged and where he was shot to death by unidentified individuals who later fled.

In a rare show of religious unity, six members of the Haitian Bishops Conference (CEH) and Apostolic Nuncio Monsignor Lorenzo Baldisseri officiated the mass with priests of the order. The Haitian church is divided between supporters and opponents of Aristide.

In his homily, Father Alphonse Quesnel, of the same order as Vincent, referred to the priest as "one more victim of state terrorism" and said that "never before in Haiti had someone gone so far against those who struggle for justice and the cause of the poor."

Quesnel read a message of condolence from Pope John Paul II and another from the superior general of the Montfortains order in Rome, who asked that the crime be investigated by "national and international justice institutions."

The ceremony was attended by U.S. Ambassador William Swing, Robert Malval, the internationally recognized prime minister who has resigned, and officials of the Foreign Ministry of the Emile Jonassaint government, which is not internationally recognized. Swing said Father Vincent's death is "tragic for Haiti, his family, and those who struggle for peace in Haiti and the world."

U.S. Spokesmen: 'Eventuality' of Invasion 'Drawing Closer'

FL0209232994 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] The threats of intervention are becoming real. Heads of the U.S. Congress, even those most opposed to this military intervention in Haiti, today believe that this eventuality is drawing closer. I think that we will be forced to intervene in Haiti, whether I hope that it can could be avoided or not, stated Lee Hamilton on 1 September; he is the Democratic leader of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the House of Representatives.

It should be recalled that the United States, on 30 August, acquired the support of the Caribbean countries and the participation of four of them in a multinational force of 10,000 men. This force could invade Haiti to drive out those responsible for the 30 September 1991 coup d'etat. United in their support, the U.S. State Department and the Pentagon together assert that this coalition will not be on the ground with rifles, and that the intervention will be a question of weeks. The military option is being studied more intensively than ever before, said the Democratic Black Caucus leader. The Black Caucus is a group of black congressmen in favor of a strong-arm attitude toward the Haitian military.

Now that they have obtained collaboration, symbolic even of its Caribbean allies, the United States must preserve its credibility in the region, explains Democratic Representative Charles Rangel. They must prove to the Haitian military that they are not speaking idly, he added. If you asked most Americans today, or if you put the question to a vote in Congress, the result would be much hesitation, reluctance, and opposition to an invasion, says Democrat Lee Hamilton. The hesitant persons, he explains, would like to be sure that the Americans would be quickly replaced in Haiti by a UN force as provided by Resolution 940 of the Security Council. Beyond all these questions, the Pentagon today began to prepare an assessment of such an operation, of a military intervention in Haiti. The cost of this operation would be about $500 million.

Provisional Government Announces New Economic Measures

PA0409033594 Paris AFP in Spanish 0214 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 3 Sep (AFP)—The government of Emile Jonassaint, the provisional president who is not recognized by the international community, announced today several measures that seek to resist the economic and financial crisis affecting the country.

A government communique noted that the measures are intended to halt increases in the price of staples and control the "arbitrary" rate of exchange of the gourde, the national currency, in relation to the dollar.

The measures include negotiations with importers to lower the price of staples, including rice, milk, sugar, cooking oil, beans, flour, medicine, and school supplies. The official announcement adds that nongovernmental organizations will have to issue advisories on all imports, while the government will subsidize domestic crops and will clean irrigation canals to encourage national production.

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Brokers who intervened in an "abusive" manner in the exchange market will be penalized, restrictions on bank credits will be adopted, and companies that transfer foreign currency will have to pay their customers in gourdes according to exchange rates established daily by the central bank.

The communique concluded by saying that the public dining hall program will be extended throughout the country.

More on Economic Measures

PA0609023194 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2236 GMT 5 Sep 94

[By Harold Jean-Francois]

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 5 Sep (EFE)—The de facto Haitian Government adopted over the weekend a series of measures to confront the declining economic situation of this Caribbean country.

Stock market and money transfer operations must be paid to clients in gourdes, the national currency, at the rate established by the central bank. Foreign exchange generated by weekly money transfer operations must be reported in detail. Centers that receive money transfers are obliged to give a detailed report of weekly operations. The central bank will regularly control the accounts and ledgers of these financial centers, which will risk being fined if they do not comply with the central bank provisions.

According to the new provisions, exporters are obliged to turn in to the central bank their foreign exchange purchase receipts at the time that they pay their customs duties. At the same time, the central bank informed the national credit card company, SOGECARTE, of the decision to temporarily prohibit credit to consumers. In that sense, the central bank will not accept the issue of new credit cards or an increase of credit to current credit card holders.

The central bank has sent commercial banks a communique advising them of these measures. Only national producers and importers can obtain loans on the condition that they show the central bank that the products are on the government's list of products that are authorized financing. Any request for new credit must be presented by commercial banks to the central bank for approval.

Also, the government announced its readiness to negotiate with importers of basic staples to subsidize reserves, starting with a reference price to be established by the Trade Ministry. To limit the demand for foreign exchange, the de facto government established a list of products authorized for import, such as milk, sugar, wheat, rice, string beans, corn, cement, construction material, and oil by-products, in general. Authorities also decided to subsidize fuel purchases for trucks that transport products to maintain stocks.

Measures were also announced to support farming production, while the objective was established to increase subsidies from 15 to 20 million gourdes monthly to avoid having to request financing from the central bank.

Economists here said that the measures announced by the government will not have a positive effect and said that any attempt to control the market with restrictive measures will provoke the creation of a black market.

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Cuban Rafters Arrive at Isla Mujeres on Small Boat

PA0509032794 Paris AFP in Spanish 0216 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Cancun, Mexico, 4 Sep (AFP)—A group of 17 Cuban "rafters" arrived at Isla Mujeres, Mexico, today, immigration sources reported.

The Cuban fugitives [as received] arrived on a small boat named "San Antonio" from the Cuban province of Pinar del Rio. The date of their departure is unknown.

The group of "rafters" consists of 16 men and one woman. Immigration authorities asked the Cubans not to make any statements to the press; therefore, their plans are also unknown.

Thirty-seven "rafters" have arrived along the coasts of the Mexican state of Quintana Roo during the past two weeks.

The Mexican Government announced last week it will receive Cubans who wish to emigrate from their country, as long as they have relatives in Mexico and economic means to support themselves.

Cubans have not been leaving their country in that manner thus far, while approximately 300 Cuban "rafters" have arrived along Mexican coasts since July.

About 65 Cuban Rafters Arrive on Southeastern Coasts

PA0609045294 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0350 GMT 6 Sep 94

[Text] Cancun, 5 Sep (NOTIMEX)—Some 65 Cubans, who were heading for the United States aboard flimsy vessels, arrived on the coasts of the southeastern Mexican state of Quintana Roo between 4 and 5 September, local sources have reported.

Rafael Betanzos Gallifa, head of the Port Captain's Office at Isla Mujeres, said that the Mexican Navy reported on 5 September the arrival on Contoy Island of two vessels, one with 21 passengers and another with four aboard.

A pregnant woman and two minors were taken to the hospital on Isla Mujeres for a checkup, while the other rafters were sent to this port on the Mexican Caribbean coast.

Alberto Romo Garcia, delegate in the region of the National Migration Institute (INM), said that a 28-feet vessel early on 5 September arrived on the coast of Isla Mujeres with 24 Cubans on board, including eight children and seven women.

He added that a day earlier, 16 rafters who had arrived at Isla Mujeres aboard a small vessel were tranferred to Cancun and housed in a private residence.

All Cubans who arrived in Quintana Roo have voiced their wish to travel to the United States, where their relatives live.

Mario Ramirez Canul, secretary of the Cancun City Council, reported that the Cecilio Chi Auditorium was set up as a provisional shelter for the Cuban rafters, while the immigration authorities define their legal status.

In the past 12 months, about 348 Cubans arrived in the state by sea after the vessels in which they were traveling [words indistinct] toward the United States.

Carlos Fuentes on 'Mexican Temptations'

PA0209171194 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 27 Aug 94 pp 1, 6

[Commentary by Carlos Fuentes, novelist and social critic: "Mexican Temptations"]

[Text] A postmortem on the Mexican elections tempts one to make a socio-psychological analysis of the process, first of all. Mexico, which is a country where family is foremost in society, voted for its mother and father: the Institutional Revolutionary Party [PRI], which almost completely summarizes our parthenogenetic need for parental protection. It does not matter if our father whips us or our mother wanders down the wrong path. What the hell, they are our mother and father, even with all their faults.

We wish they were not such scoundrels. We wish they were less violent and more democratic. What they cannot change—apparently—is that they are "my family," the one that hands out positions, candies, privileges, riches, scoldings, discipline, and calls to order. Would it not be ungrateful for the peasants and farmers, who received a handout from Pronasol [National Solidarity Program] or Procampo [Program of Direct Support to the Countryside] to vote for the opposition for the very first time?

Are we perhaps a country with a vocation for living in a dynasty? In our history, we have been governed by the Aztec monarchy since 1312. Then, from 1521 to 1700, the Hapsburgs set our table (with a little dessert from another member of the family, Maximilian Joseph from 1862 to 1867). The Bourbons picked up the dynasty's scepter from 1700 to 1821, followed later by Porfirio Diaz, who gave the country a home so safe that it felt more like a jail.

This lasted for 30 years. The PRI will enter the year 2000 with its Inherited Republic.

The PRI undervalues and inherits us all. Hector Aguilar Camin once eloquently wrote about an unprotected people in need of protection, and Octavio Paz wrote of the infinite patience of the Mexicans. Why then, the sudden bolt of lightening, the unforeseen eruption, the Maderist revolution just two months before the Profirist

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celebration? As Aguilar Camin suggests: Could it be the feeling of defenselessness when the roof falls in and the foundations sink and we are left trembling out in the cold?

A vote out of fear? In our year of living dangerously, the Chiapas uprising, the death of Colosio, the battles of the drug traffickers, the increasing personal insecurity, the stagnated economy, and the deferred miracles of NAFTA, instead of benefiting the opposition, have benefited the PRI, the family, and shelter. Is this grounds enough to consolidate a new old PRI government, which will be the last one before the end of the millenium?

Of course not. Almost half the country voted against the PRI and for the opposition. This fact shows the country's division between its conservative, dynastic (better the devil you know than the angel you don't), patriarchal drive and its dwindling patience, its mustang instinct, and its political ideals. Democracy is the Mexican Tantalus, always longing for the fruit that disappears whenever one gets close enough to pick it.

From here stem two new temptations. One is the temptation of the triumphalism of the PRI and its candidate. The other is the temptation of the PRD's violence and its own. Triumphalism and violence, however, complement one another, and forget the true postelection lesson. That lesson is nothing more than the need to present and strengthen an agenda of political and social changes capable of saving from the traumas of this past year. The election must never become a source of conflict in Mexico. If it does, the country might explode and identify those responsible this time.

Now more than ever groups within civilian society, such as San Angel and other similar groups that will surely arise in other cities across the country, have the responsibility to clearly present and fight for an agenda capable of banishing the temptation of triumphalism and its opposite temptation of violence. Democracy is a process, not a single electoral event. We are all well aware that the agenda we must stand by implies federalism, distribution of power, measures for balancing presidentialism, administration of justice, access to the media, tax reform, and, of course, clean elections. This is what the government and the opposition must work for in order to put an end to dynastic temptations, the temptations of fear, and the temptation of violence.

But democracy begins at home, and no one has a greater responsibility to make it work that the government and the ruling party. It is true: they have been its worst enemies. Can we get apples from an oak tree? It is also true to say there can never be democracy in Mexico while there is none within the PRI. Handpicking people should not be allowed any more. The PRI must hold free internal elections to select its candidates. This way the best men and women will surface. A promise, which has only been a joke until to now, must be kept for this to come about. That promise is separating the state and the party. It will cost the government and the party dearly if this promise is not kept during a less turbulent year than this.

Something more than this is required in this specific postelectoral situation. Anyway, the effort for organization and purity put forth on 21 August, which picked up on the demands of large social sectors, was marred by the fraudulent lethargy of the official apparatus. In many instances, this lethargy was augmented by the desire to commit fraud. The Electoral Inspector's Office must redouble its efforts to clarify these cases and penalize those responsible. Any governors who failed to obey the president's order to enforce the law should be punished exemplarily. There were nasty and wicked people at the beginning of the term. There could also be at the end of it.

The temptation to do violence will persist, however, and its presence poses another problem, the fate of the opposition in Mexico. Eruptions of violence would only strengthen the conservative trend of the today's majority because, if nearly half of the country voted for the opposition, nearly four-fifths of the country voted for the center right represented by PRI-PAN [Institutional Revolutionary Party-National Action Party]. The latter tripled the number of votes received in 1988 and is the country's second most powerful party.

The majorities are fluid and can shift to the left but only if the left shifts to the center. This might offend our sense of theoretical virginity, but it is impossible to conduct politics without stealing membership from PRI and PAN. This will take patience, but less without violence than with it.

The PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] must be recreated to fight the voters from a closer position in order to weaken the PRI-government combination, but in particular to secure votes for a reformist platform that the PRI-government combination will not be able to fulfill without the presence of a leftist, nondogmatic, nonpersonalist, and unresentful political opposition. There will be no democracy in Mexico without an intelligent, modern, postcommunist political left. Social democracy? So be it. The PRI does not even get to this point.

At the peak of its electoral power in 1988, the PRD was unable to negotiate politically and now has failed to use the power it had at the time to deal with the present crisis. Politics is not done in fits of anger. Neither Cardenas in 1988 nor Camacho in 1993. Politics is dialogue, negotiation, without losing an iota of conviction or firmness.

If PRI does not reform itself, this will be its last government. IF PRD does not reform itself, it will never reach government.

I voted for Cuauhtemoc Cardenas on 21 August. A very respectable figure from a moral standpoint, Cardenas

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possesses proven uprightness and courage to recognize reality and help the progress of the left in which he so ardently believes. At present, that progress involves rejection of violence and firmness to demand that the authorities play their proper postelectoral roles. That is to say, civic resistance to abuses of power, affirmation of the national agenda from here to the year 2000, rejection of the crepuscular dogmatism of grouplets, opening and reorganization of the party around its more rational, balanced, and constructive members.

Everyone's temptation now consists of doing politics against the fatalism, fears, arrogance, haughtiness, inertia, and violence of our traditions. Let us create a new, modern, inclusive and demanding tradition, first of all, for ourselves.

Column Discusses Probable Zedillo Cabinet

PA0209142694 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 29 Aug 94 p 70

[From the "Political Rehash" column by Jesus Sanchez]

[Text] Their thumbs still stained with ink, abacuses in hand, and notes vaccinated against any ideological viruses, think tankers [preceding two words published in English] at the Reconstruction of Political Images (RIP) set out to form their first conclusions from the field study conducted on 21 August. And what about the collision of the two trains, eh?

Between the Zedillo-style lemon-and-strawberry refreshments, RIP analysts agreed to use as their starting point in this postelectoral assessment the hypothetical influence that the Shoemaker-Levy 9 comet's energy radiation in Jupiter had on voters.

RIP analysts figured that the reading of the first part of their report would arouse some suspicions, in particular, not the collision of trains, but of stellar fragments on Jupiter and their effects on the votes for the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]. But they did not flinch and instead proffered a profile of what we could expect in the coming weeks once the federal vote count is finished.

1. Zedillo's cabinet or the boundaries of pluralism. [sentence as published] One of the new conditions established by the political exercise in the recent and highly competitive federal elections is the permanence of pluralism as a prerequisite for stability in the country and the need to reassess both the concept of a president holding full powers and the PRI's fifth reform.

Alejandro Ramos, a well-known and serious analyst, hinted at an interesting composition in the cabinet of the coming term. For the first time in decades, if not in the country's history, the new government would include personalities proposed by opposition parties for key positions such as the attorney general and/or the federation's comptroller general. This would show willingness to change and establish a balance of power in the country, with a less personalized and less PRI-controlled presidency.

2. As we have commented in this column, in the Government Secretariat we can expect a separation of the strictly electoral functions. In other words, the Federal Electoral Institute will not necessarily be headed by the person responsible for the country's domestic policy.

3. Halfway through last week, Rogelio Montemayor Seguy, the present governor of Coahuila, traveled to Mexico City to meet with President Salinas and Ernesto Zedillo. Montemayor is part of the Colosio-Zedillo group. Curiously, it was Montemayor who introduced Colosio to Salinas. Montemayor was director of the National Statistics, Geography, and Computers Institute (INEGI) and prepared Zedillo's appearance at the Chamber of Deputies when Zedillo was programming and budget secretary. The ties are more than strong. Those who can read between the lines in these events think the man from Coahuila will surely be incorporated into Zedillo's cabinet in the area of finance or as the head of an important parastatal corporation.

Montemayor's position in Coahuila's governorship could be held by Melchor de los Santos, who won a seat in the Senate and who is also a key member in Colosio's group.

4. Pedro Aspe and Jaime Serra Puche could be sent to international organizations to reinforce Mexico's serious reincorporation into world trade, particularly if Salinas becomes president of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

5. Members of the business sector look skeptically on Aspe's staying in public finance positions because, although his tenure in the SHCP [Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit] has met with general approval, he is regarded as a hard-line fiscal inspector. The industrialists have demanded that they stop being treated as potential criminals.

6. Oscar Terroba Garza, the incumbent under secretary for planning at the Secretariat of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources (SARH), could replace Carlos Hank Gonzalez. Terroba Garza is a 38-year-old economist whose work links him to Aspe's team. He was in charge of liquidating the National Agricultural and Livestock Insurance Company (ANAGSA) which, together with Banrural [National Rural Credit Bank], was for a long time regarded as a political control organization in the peasant sector. Terroba Garza also started Agroasemex [expansion unknown]. With Agroasemex, which he managed until April this year, he insured 30 percent of the country's tillable land and stimulated peasants' insurance. In April, he replaced Luis Tellez Kuenzler at the SARH's undersecretariat for planning, where he purged the lists of producers who would be subsidized by Procampo [Program of Direct Support to the Countryside]. The economist handed out the Procampo subsidies

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during June and July. In all, he handed out 4,028,000 checks for a total of 4.332 billion new pesos.

7. Another deal that could be in the works is one between Manuel Camacho and Ernesto Zedillo. According to unconfirmed reports, Camacho has already met with Zedillo and a surprise is said to be in store: Camacho's participation in the PRI reform, directly or through Francisco Ruiz Massieu, the current CEN [National Executive Committee] secretary general, a man from Guerrero State. It is said that Ruiz Massieu will be the sure leader of the Chamber of Deputies. (According to some stories, it took Camacho eight minutes to vote. Maybe he was looking for his name on the ballot).

8. Cuauhtemoc Cardenas' decision not to run for president again, a decision formalized at Saturday's rally at the Zocalo (and that barely drew a single tear) was an honorable end for the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] candidate. Cardenas said that his opposition to the regime will continue but within the legal framework. Cardenas dismissed any temptation to take a violent stand, a reaction eagerly sought by some of his more radical supporters.

9. The moral battle against the PRI's disproportionate political competition mentioned by Cardenas shows that there is a strong internal conflict within the PRD. This conflict, if not overcome, would lead the PRD—which has become the third largest in a short period of time—to its downfall. The party's survival is one of the PRD leaders' top priorities.

10. Porfirio Munoz Ledo will be 64 years old in the year 2000. According to serious PRD members, Munoz Ledo could not try to be a candidate for president at the end of this century unless he wants to carry the stigma of gerontocracy and obsolescence which is so often criticized these days.

11. According to the RIP analysts, the Chiapas mediation effort is a temporary thing. Although no one wants Eduardo Robledo to leave, the names of three possible candidates to negotiate the pacification of Chiapas are being mentioned. (These candidates are aside from the votes that Subcommander Marcos promoted in the presidential race in favor of PRI.) Emilio O. Rabasa, Sergio Mota Marin, and Emelio Zepeda are the three candidates.

Miscellaneous

—The final count of district votes:

Ernesto Zedillo won the presidential elections with 50.18 percent of the country's votes. Diego Fernandez de Cevallos came in second with 26.69 percent, and Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, third with 17.08 percent.

—Zedillo recovered the votes in Jalisco, a place that was lost in the 1988 elections. Jalisco is one of the worst affected political areas of the country. It is not easy to forget the explosions of 22 April 1992, the fall of Governor Cosio Vidaurri, the assassination of Cardinal Posadas, and the explosion of a car bomb in Zapopan as a result of a settling of accounts by drug traffickers. PRI won the two senate seats there. It won 11 of the 20 districts for federal deputies. PRI Coordinator Victor Hugo Celaya took his chances when he admitted the negative figures his party had gotten in nine districts (those in Guadalajara and Zapopan). This was something local PRI members did not like but they accepted it later on.

—Definitions: Arturo Nunez maintains that in Mexico, the electoral reform has done its share in the quest to have clean and credible elections. This achievement must be followed by new attitudes and behaviors on the part of politicians. Full democracy can only be built by applying a common code of democratic values within a representative regime such as ours.

— RIP Lapidary Phrases:

Part I. (The RIP think tankers use Carlos Monsivais' slogan or demand: Names! Names!)

"In its own time (in the time of Adolfo Lugo Verduzco) I asked that expulsions from the party be made effective. There are PRI members that are a shame to the country. There are PRI members that in their zeal to climb political positions commit shameless acts, acts of corruption that denigrate the political career.

"I oppose and will always oppose that.

"Fortunately, there are not too many like that. However, they do stand out like a sore thumb.

"They are sly, cunning but intelligent people who climb to power. They are the opportunists, the climbers, the corrupt. They infiltrate campaigns and it is time to remove them.

"We must carry out this purge if we want to continue the multiparty system for the sake of Mexico," Victor Manzanilla Shaffer, former Yucatan governor, said. He remained firm in his stand but did not disclose the names of those he accuses.

Part II. "If PRI wants to remain as a strong party, then all cunning inviduals must go," former PRI National President Pedro Ojeda Paullada noted. (But gave no names).

"We cannot say we won but neither can we say that we participated in a clean process," Agustin Guerrero of the PRD said at the ceremony to deliver credentials to Senate seat winners Maria de los Angeles Moreno and Fernando Solana Morales with 41.95 percent of the total votes in the Federal District.

— Heard on the corner of Violeta and Insurgentes:

Rumors are just that, rumors.

Of course.

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Do not mind what I say, but it is rumored that the PRI voting was high because there was collective hypnosis.

You don't say!

Commentary Questions Left for Not Conceding Electoral Defeat

PA0209171694 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 29 Aug 94 p 5

[Commentary by Roberto Blancarte: "The PRD and the Civic Alliance: Lessons of 21 August"]

[Text] I continue to be perplexed by the fact there is no explanation from the rhetoric of the Mexican left of the 21 August elections: Why, beyond pressure, coercion, corporateness, and other forms of political corruption, a vast majority of voters preferred to vote for the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]?

In arguments made by some intellectuals, many of whom during the week preceding the election openly asked voters to vote for Cardenas, there is mistrust and frustration over the resulst of the elections. This is explained by the fear, use of state resources in favor of the official party, irregularities, partiality of the media, and many other factors that undoubtedly existed and resulted in an electoral process leaving much to be desired. However, a question I deem important is still unresolved: A large majority of voters, between 70 and 80 percent of voters registered on the lists, voted for the PRI. It has already been said that even if we take into account all irregularities and grant those votes to the opposition, this opposition cannot pretend to be the winner. It must therefore accept that people voted overwhelmingly for the PRI. Without failing to draw attention to the irregularities and vices that are still marring the electoral process, it must analyze its own mistakes made in its political and electoral strategies. For instance, the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] concluded that Mexicans cast their votes out of a fear of change. Should we assume this assessment is true, the PRD would have to study whether it did not contribute to augmenting that fear among voters by promoting an unfortunate strategy. The image the PRD projected cannot be attributed exclusively to the media; it was the result of an obstinate and obsessive strategy that failed and, contrary to its stated purpose, drove many voters away. In other words, the PRD squandered much of the political capital it originally had throughout its campaign.

But I do not think the previous assessment is very serious, but the "left's" unconscious disregard for the masses is. Deep down, by failing to accept that people might still prefer the PRI's political option, many intellectuals and members of opposition parties are displaying flagrant contempt for the masses. They are assuming people could not have been able to consciously decide how to vote due to the most trivial or significant reasons the opposition can imagine. It believes the only explanation for that vote of fear is pressure from or brainwashing by the electronic media. The opposition cannot accept that many people from all walks of life still prefer the PRI over any of the other political options. Better yet, they cannot recognize that none of the other parties presented themselves as a better alternative. To this effect, many voters will continue to think of the PRI as a lesser evil or as the least evil of all partisan choices.

Worse yet, the position taken by many of these intellectuals and members of opposition parties hides a contempt for electoral democracy. They do not understand why the masses do not have the clear conscious and political positions they have, thereby failing to even recognize the overwhelming vote for a party like the PRI. Thus, they are overriding the majority's vote, whether they like it or not, without any doubts. I wonder what would have happened had the results been closer and had the difference among the number of votes garnered by each party been smaller? Would the opposition have had the right to challenge a process that did not favor it? How much must the PRI win to be recognized as the winner?

I want to be understood here. I am not saying that we must ignore the serious irregularities committed not only on 21 August but also throughout the electoral process. From my point of view, the two most serious irregularities were the use of public resources to favor the ruling party and the lack of respect for the secrecy of the vote. I believe that the best manner to confront these and other irregularities is not by taking not quite objective, maximalist, and deeply antidemocratic positions. I am including here my friends from the Democratic Alliance, friends who, despite their own allegations, have been unable to remain faithful. For instance, on 28 August, Enrique Calderon wrote an article saying that "the exemplary efforts made by Civic Alliance members failed to prevent the shameful practices of the past from being committed during the elections, nor could it prevent the same group that has harmed the nation so much from being separated from power." Was then the objective of the Civic Alliance to prevent the PRI from winning the elections? I do not think so, in all sincerity. I know I did not agree to be a member of the Civic Alliance Citizens Council having this objective in mind.

It seems to me that said position and the ambiguities that the Civic Alliance has expressed on the matter fail to contribute to the positive role played during these elections—a role which it should continue to play because the 21 August elections are not the only elections in this country. The left and its intellectuals, the PRD, and the Civic Alliance, which are different entities, must then begin to learn the democratic lesson. To this effect, people never err. As far as I am concerned and because of what I write here, I am ready to be excommunicated.

Commentary Reviews 'Distorted' Analyses of Elections

PA0209171994 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 27 Aug 94 p 19

[Commentary by Luis Pazos, free market advocate and director general of the Institute for Ibero-American Integration: "Distorted Analyses of the Elections"]

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[Text] Among the not quite intellectual people in Mexico, the idea that the more confusing and complicated their analyses are, the more respect their readers will have still persists. Instead of describing reality simply, they twist it around, especially as it fails to favor them.

During the last six years, many intellectuals who substituted the word leftist for the word democrat on business cards regarded the votes cast by the majority as the solution to all problems in Mexico.

The program prepared by some groups and parties was basically geared toward achieving democracy, which would solve all Mexican problems.

Now that we have had elections with a record-breaking turnout in Mexican history, more than 70 percent of the voters, they are trying to distort these elections, simply because the results were not as they expected.

To this stage, it is clear that many of the apparently "independent" groups and associations that called themselves fighters for democracy preferred one of the parties in the electoral race. This is why a few days before the elections they asked people to cast their votes, as the EZLN [Zapatist National Liberation Army] and some members of the so-called San Angel Group did.

Let's face it: many of the pressure groups that hid behind the mask worn by champions of democracy and the honest vote are those who are now refusing to accept that the elections reflected a degree of honesty perhaps never achieved before in the history of Mexico.

PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] followers want to use the problem that emerged at the so-called special polling stations, which represented 0.6 percent of the total number of polling stations, to annul the most-voted elections in the modern history of Mexico.

Paradoxically, the PRD representatives were the ones who proposed the reduction in the number of ballots available at the special polling stations. The Federal Electoral Institute originally proposed including 750 ballots per polling station, but based upon the PRD motion, which all political parties approved, that number was reduced to 300.

However, even if we accept the premise that all those who could not cast their votes at the special polling stations had voted for the PRD—a premise not supported by the tendency observed in those who did vote—this party would not have won the elections. The percentage of voters who favored it would increase by less that 1 percent—a percentage that would still place the PRD in a distant third place with regard to the number of votes obtained by the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] and PAN [National Action Party].

The votes cast by more than 30 million Mexicans who voted peacefully and without any problem and who represented more than 70 percent of the citizens enrolled in the electoral register cannot be annulled or ignored by a group that already proved it cannot reach power through democratic elections. They are trying to magnify a problem worsened mainly by their motion.

Not a single wise person would accept that the votes legally cast by 30 million people be declared void or fraudulent, just because a small group was unable to vote according to the rules of the game approved by all parties or because of failures that are within a reasonable margin of error with regard to the number of voters included on the electoral register.

The 21 August elections showed Mexicans' preferences, fears, dreams, and distortions. We could perhaps believe these elections are not the best elections ever, but they were democratic elections.

These elections proved the PRI retained its electoral clientele, which is less than half the number of Mexicans. The PAN doubled its number of voters, and the PRD failed to obtain less than half the number of votes in their favor.

These facts are simple and arithmetically verifiable and reflect most Mexicans' preferences. Any analysis on the last elections must be based upon these facts, regardless of how "serious" and scientific the analysts think they are.

Commentary Foresees Continuation of Current Government

PA0209201594 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 31 Aug 94 p 30

[From the "Profiles" column by Alberto Tovar: "Welcome to Zedilloism"]

[Text] Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, 30 Aug—As usual, at the end of any administration, the old saying: "The king is dead, long live the king," is about to come true. We will now see a new trend which will try to project a its own personality onto state decisions.

"Zedilloism," then, represents continuity. In addition to Ernesto Zedillo being a product of the system, the deadlocks created by Salinas will prevent any sudden changes, if Zedillo wants to protect stability. But there are changes that must be made. This opens the way to a different approach to such changes, which could reduce the presence of the outgoing administration.

The euphoric attitude of the business sector presents Ernesto Zedillo as omnipotent leader, capable of solving the nation's problems by simply rising to power. Unfortunately, this is nothing more than a mirage, and major and risky decisions will be made during the coming years.

Even though the possibility of financial stability is rising on the horizon, over expectations that large amounts of money will flow into the country, the new leader will have to deal with conflicts between growth and inflation.

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There are two elements that will strongly influence the action plan. The first is the strategy behind the exchange rate flotation parameters. Experts already say it will need adjustments very soon. The second is making public finances more flexible, which in turn will help reactivate the economy and reduce social tension.

One of Salinas de Gortari's legacies will be foreign dependence. Bear in mind that we are now subject to IMF supervision in order to receive financial assistance or renegotiate liabilities. Foreign intervention in all areas means we will almost have to let them certify our performance if we want peace.

In light of this, Zedillo will have to decide whether to respond to foreign interest requirements, which do not always agree with our national interest.

It is clear that progress has been made on the macro level and that there is still much to be done on the social level.

Privatizing the banking industry and creating financial groups was one essential step toward modernizing that sector. However, the process is not yet complete. As a matter of fact, the Havre case is just the tip of the iceberg in that sector's current crisis, not to mention the establishment of local and foreign intermediaries on the market.

The real impact of NAFTA will be felt during this administration. If nothing is done, it will also make things worse for the small business sector. The sector has been unable to face the challenge of competitive marketing and has also suffered fiscal persecution and high financial costs.

In addition to the microeconomic recovery plan, the government must create a system to channel a larger portion of foreign capital to long-term investment in the industrial area, instead of pouring it into the financial system.

If it does, we can expect significant growth in industry as well as more balanced growth rate all along the production chain. This will ensure better distribution of the resulting bonanza.

There will also be need for significant tax changes. The tax system can be a burden or it can provide support. Such changes could cut certain taxes, eliminate others, increase the number of deductibles, and simplify tax collection.

Everything in the area of social policy needs attention. Pronasol [National Solidarity Program] smells like the old administration and provided no more than a temporary solution to extreme poverty. The program was justified within the perspective of macroeconomic reform. The issue of defeating poverty, however, must now become one of the administration's basic platforms.

The farming situation is directly related to poverty and social policy. Most of the less favorable living conditions can be found here. More than Pronasol, the sector requires structural support in order to reverse the backward trend and make farming a profitable activity again.

The government must place special attention on creating jobs and on finding ways of combining increased productivity and training, while promoting activities that generate great amounts of labor.

Social security strategies are also included here. the Retirement Savings System fell short and will need reforming, as will the general health system.

"Zedilloism," as you have seen, will gradually move away from continuity and toward its new version of the facts. He will impose a new style and most probably accept responsibility for the decisions of the past.

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Costa Rica

Cuba's Robaina Arrives, Meets With Figueres

PA0209181094 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1656 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] San Jose, 2 Sep (NOTIMEX)—Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina and Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres met here today to discuss Costa Rica's policy on Cuba.

Robaina arrived at 0940 (1540 GMT) at Juan Santamaria International Airport, where he was greeted by the Costa Rican president.

Minutes later, Robaina and Figueres met in the airport diplomatic room to study Costa Rica's decision to install an interests office in Cuba.

The Costa Rican Government agreed this week to open an office in Cuba, which will be in charge of arranging the departure of Cubans who are claimed by relatives in Costa Rica.

It was learned that Robaina and Figueres will also study Costa Rica's position on the Cuban situation at the upcoming OAS meeting, the dates for which have not been announced.

Figueres and his Colombian counterpart, Ernesto Samper, issued a communique in Panama yesterday appealing to the United States to lift the economic embargo against Cuba.

Figueres and Samper, who attended the change of power ceremony in Panama with other Latin American personalities, said the economic embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States is the direct cause of the massive exodus of Cubans.

The Cuban foreign minister is scheduled to travel to Honduras this afternoon at 1500 (2100 GMT) on his tour if several Central American countries. The minister just concluded a visit to Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

Discuss U.S. Embargo, Rafters

PA0209225594 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2005 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] San Jose, 2 Sep (ACAN-EFE)—Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Roberto Robaina today said in Costa Rica that the lifting of the economic blockade imposed by the United States more than 30 years ago "will fail to resolve the problems" Cuba has, but it would lead to a "better way" to face them.

As part of a tour of six Latin American countries, Robaina today met with Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres to analyze the Cuban situation, the "rafters," the negotiations with the United States, and the eventual opening of a Costa Rican interests office on the Caribbean island.

At a news conference he held with Figueres at Juan Santamaria International Airport, the foreign minister pointed out that although the lifting of the blockade does not mean an automatic solution to all of Cuba's problems, "it is a better way to face a reality that continues to be tense and difficult."

Latin America's and Europe's response has been "very significant, but it still fails to resolve the problem," added the diplomat as he discussed those countries, including Costa Rica, that opposed the U.S. blockade at the United Nations last year.

Robaina, who today travelled to Honduras on board a chartered Cubana de Aviacion plane, underscored that his current tour "is opening new opportunities" to ensure that those countries that dared to condemn the blockade "will now dare to invest in Cuba."

"Several countries are contributing to help open a fissure in the blockade," he stated, as he pointed out that in addition to the U.S. blockade, Cuba is facing obstacles prompted by the fall of the communist world in 1989, which has forced the nation to restructure its entire industry.

"Our lack of accountability and the bureaucratic procedures" we are trying to overcome represent a third blockade, Robaina said.

As for the "rafters," he explained this is a situation the United States has encouraged for 35 years, and Cuba "is determined not to take measures to guard the coasts" of that country.

"It is not our role; there is no need to have illegal departures," he said, adding that these departures could take place in an "orderly and legal" fashion.

Robaina also stressed he does not mind that the negotiations being held with Washington in New York City since yesterday are "opening with a discussion of the migration issue," but he explained that they must also cover other issues, such as the support expressed by American and European countries with regard to the lifting of the blockade.

The Cuban foreign minister is pleased with the Costa Rican Government's decision to open an interests office in Havana to process the requests by islanders who want to go to Costa Rica, adding that this decision constitutes "a breakthrough" for the two nations to get to know one another better.

However, both Robaina and Figueres denied that this measure, for the time being, will lead to the resumption of diplomatic relations, which were broken off more that 30 years ago.

Meanwhile, President Figueres praised Cuba's achievements in the areas of health, medicine, and housing. Nevertheless, he went on to outline in a fraternal and candid fashion the benefits that Costa Rica has reaped from adopting a democratic system.

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"We hope to reach a gradual solution without bloodshed among the Cuban families," remarked Figueres, noting that he had invited Robaina to this meeting because he wanted to know more about the Cuban situation and to explain his concerns.

"I told him (Robaina) that all of these issues concern the Cuban family, and the sooner this family begins holding talks, the sooner it will find an overall solution to its problems," stated Figueres, who just returned from Panama where he attended President Ernesto Perez Balladares' inaugural.

Authorities To Ask Cubans To Pay $245 Deposit for Relatives

PA0409212594 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1850 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] San Jose, 4 Sep (NOTIMEX)—Costa Rican immigration authorities will ask Cubans living in the country to pay a $245 deposit for each relative entering the country, General Immigration Director Eduardo Zumbado has reported.

Due to the exodus of Cubans to U.S. territory, the Costa Rican Government has agreed to grant temporary visas to Cuban citizens who would like to leave the Caribbean island on the condition that they have relatives in the country and that their stay be for a 24-month period.

The crisis of the Cuban exodus worsened following Washington's ban on receiving undocumented immigrants from the island after the Havana regime ordered that no one wishing to leave that country be stopped.

The administration of President William Clinton has decided to house the Cubans who were plucked from the sea at the military base of Guantanamo and asked third countries for assistance in containing the exodus.

Due to the seriousness of the conflict caused by the departure of thousands of Cubans leaving for the United States in flimsy boats, the governments of Mexico, Costa Rica, and Panama have decided to adopt special measures to soften the island's immigration crisis.

The Costa Rican official has said the deposit is equal to the Havana-San Jose air fare and will be reimbursed when the person leaves the country.

Zumbado added that individuals requesting visas must prove their consanguinity with Cuban residents in Costa Rica.

This measure will also be applied, according to the official, to Haitians who would like to leave their country and travel temporarily to Costa Rican territory.

Costa Rica will open an immigration office at the Spanish Embassy in Cuba in the next few days and will offer to mediate in the Cuban issue, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo has reported.

The Costa Rican foreign minister has told the newspaper LA REPUBLICA his country's participation in the Cuban issue "will be the result of a hemispheric decision."

Naranjo has reiterated the support of the administration of Jose Maria Figueres in lifting the commercial blockade imposed by the United States against the island during the last three decades and Cuba's return to the OAS. Naranjo has made that support conditional, however, upon "the implementation of political changes guaranteeing a full respect for human rights, freedom of expression, movement, and democratic elections on the island."

Delegation Head Fears Controversies Could 'Destroy' ICPD

PA0209164494 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0009 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] San Jose, 1 Sep (NOTIMEX)—Rodrigo Carreras, Costa Rican deputy foreign minister, today warned that antagonistic positions on abortion and homosexuality could "destroy" the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Egypt this month .

In statements to NOTIMEX, Carreras regretted that "the population problems have been centered basically around the antagonistic positions on abortion and on marriages between homosexuals held by the Catholic Church and the United States."

The delegation attending the international conference in Cairo from 5 to 13 September will be lead by the deputy foreign minister, who assured that "those issues, although important, should not take all the conference's attention, although they cannot be avoided."

Latin America and the Vatican agree in their rejection of abortion and marriage between persons of the same sex. This same position was adopted by followers of Islam.

The deputy foreign minister said that the conference should do an in-depth study of population variables and their behavior in society.

He stressed the importance of taking into consideration the problems posed by poverty, which occasionally result in ethnic conflicts.

He said that demographic experts agree that in the near future birth control will be used throughout the world, but he believes this may happen when we are no longer able to feed the new population.

"What has to be done is to produce more and improve the distribution of goods and services," he added.

The problem of development should not be considered from an abstract point of view or for the benefit of a few. Instead it should be considered as a variable of the

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population policy to provide better living, health, education, employment, and recreation conditions for a population on the rise, Carreras said.

Costa Rica, he added, does not share the theory of "the right to chose abortion when other planning methods fail."

He noted that the World Ecological Summit in Brazil in 1992 "failed to take into consideration population variables" or to study demographic growth as a factor in the planet's destruction and the drain on natural resources.

Those variables, he emphasized, are the ones that should be discussed at Cairo. We should not concentrate our debate on abortion or marriage between homosexuals.

El Salvador

Foreign Minister Favors Lifting Embargo Against Cuba

PA0609023494 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2128 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] San Jose, 5 Sep (DPA)—Salvadoran Foreign Minister Oscar Santamaria said today in Costa Rica that El Salvador would be "pleased" with a possible lifting of the economic embargo the United States imposed on Cuba in 1961, as long as there is a democratic opening in that country.

Santamaria said an agreement between Washington and Havana that could permit the lifting of sanctions "would be a great step," especially if it permits Cuba's democratization and brings stability to the Caribbean region.

He added that under those conditions "it would be valid to say that there would be no reason to maintain the sanctions," following an opening in the island.

Santamaria said there is a consensus in Central America around that position.

Honduras

Government 'Pleased' With U.S. Talks With Cuba

PA0209200794 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1834 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Excerpt] Tegucigalpa, 2 Sep (NOTIMEX)—The Honduran Government has stated it is pleased with the talks Cuba and the United States are holding in New York to solve their migration problems.

Honduran Foreign Minister Ernesto Paz Aguilar has said his country is pleased to see the rapprochement between the two countries, which broke relations in 1962 when the OAS decreed Cuba's isolation.

The Honduran foreign minister has confirmed the arrival in Tegucigalpa this afternoon of his Cuban colleague, Roberto Robaina, who will meet with President Carlos Roberto Reina, members of his cabinet, and local businessmen.

Delegations from Washington and Havana initiated talks in New York yesterday with a view to facilitating a rapprochement to solve bilateral problems, particularly Cuban emigration toward U.S. territory.

Paz Aguilar returned to Tegucigalpa on Friday after attending the inauguration ceremony in Panama for Ernesto Perez Balladares, the new president of that country for the 1994-1999 term.

Honduran Government sources have said the talks between President Reina and Foreign Minister Robaina will be centered on the Cuban rafters, among other topics of importance. The Honduran foreign minister has said the government has yet to determine the number of rafters "Honduras may be willing to receive for humanitarian reasons," and he has said the decision must be discussed at the Council of Ministers. He has said in the event Cubans are authorized to come, there is a possibility they will be lodged on the Swan Islands, which are located off the Honduran coasts in the Caribbean. [passage omitted]

Cuban Foreign Minister Arrives To Discuss Refugee Issue

PA0209231694 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2103 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 2 Sep (DPA)—Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Roberto Robaina arrived this afternoon in Honduras to meet with Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina.

The Cuban foreign minister stated at Tegucigalpa's Toncontin International Airport that his presence in Honduras is not to reestablish diplomatic relations with this nation, but to outline the Cuban Government's position with respect to the domestic crisis the island is enduring.

Robaina is the first Cuban foreign minister to visit Honduras since Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, and his visit is also evidence of the end of the ideological confrontation between Havana and Tegucigalpa. The Cuban foreign minister, who arrived from Costa Rica, stated he had received an invitation from President Reina to visit Honduras and that he had taken advantage of his visit to Central America to accept the invitation.

When asked if during his brief visit to Honduras of less than 24 hours there would be any agreement to renew diplomatic relations, Robaina indicated that the reestablishment of formal relations is "impossible to improvise on such short notice." He explained that Cuba is not pressed to reestablish diplomatic relations with any nation in light of the fact that it currently maintains relations with 149 countries.

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Robaina acknowledged that he would bring up the issue of Honduras' decision to receive several thousand Cuban rafters fleeing the island en route to the United States when he meets with President Reina and his Honduran counterpart Ernesto Paz Aguilar. The Cuban foreign minister said it is up to Honduras to decide how many Cuban refugees it is willing to accept, as well as the conditions under which it will received them.

In addition, he called attention to the fact that the objective of the Cubans leaving the country on rafts is not to reach Mexico or any Central American country, but the United States.

The high-ranking Cuban official added that his current tour of the region is not designed to win political support for his government or to promote foreign investment in Cuba.

Foreign Minister, Robaina Hold News Conference

PA0309020394 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 2223 GMT 2 Sep 94

[News conference by Honduran Foreign Minister Ernesto Paz Aguilar and Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina with unidentified foreign and domestic reporters at the Presidential Palace in Tegucigalpa; broadcast in progress—live relay]

[Text] [Robaina] ...we have held very smooth discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which I believe will be even smoother when I explain not only the sentiment of the Cuban Foreign Relations Ministry, but the government's sentiment as well.

I believe that this hour-long meeting has been extremely fruitful. The president has been very interested in Cuba's reality—the reality itself, the difficulties we are facing, and our options. I had, of course, the privilege and opportunity to explain to him, with all sincerity and openness, that this is a project which, like life itself, is imperfect. Things are not as good as some say, and they are not as bad as others are bent on saying.

In an effort to get to know one another better, I have had the privilege to be here, and I can assure you [words indistinct] we know each other better. Today, I have had the opportunity to speak a lot about Cuba, and we have been able to learn a great deal about Honduras, which is of interest to my country. In order to talk about Latin American integration, we need to know each other better, those of us who live in America. In terms of those who live in America, we can get to know one another by reading the newspaper, but we really need to know each other better through personal contacts. I feel very satisfied with these personal contacts.

[Station reporter] This is a news conference with Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina following a just-concluded meeting with President Carlos Roberto Reina. We now have Honduran Foreign Minister Ernesto Paz Aguilar.

[Paz Aguilar] I want to give the most cordial welcome to Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Roberto Robaina. Over the past few months we have had fluid, direct, and frank contacts to improve relations between two sister peoples, two neighbors with a common destiny, and a common agenda for the upcoming millennium.

The Honduran Government is very pleased with your visit. The meeting with the president was fruitful. Topics of bilateral interest were discussed, as well as topics of regional interest. Tonight, the Honduran Foreign Affairs Ministry offers a formal dinner in honor of Foreign Minister Robaina and his distinguished delegation.

I reiterate our friendship and our great admiration for the great changes and processes that are being undertaken in Cuban society—processes intended to face future challenges with courage and decision.

[Station reporter] This is the welcome that our foreign minister, Dr. Ernesto Paz Aguilar, has given to his colleague Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, better known to his people in Cuba as Robertito. Now we have some questions for the Cuban foreign minister.

[Reporter] If possible, can you tell us whether you discussed with President Reina this weighty problem that has been talked about lately—namely, the possibility of accepting Cuban refugees in Honduran territory? What are the terms? Can you also discuss the establishment of diplomatic relations we talked about quickly at the airport?

[Station Reporter] Here is the foreign minister. The question was addressed directly to him.

[Robaina] I believe it is better for my host to answer these various questions; you will have a chance to speak to my host. Anyway, I wanted to say that, just as you have said, there are the problems of the rafters and the recent illegal emigration in Cuba. This has been broached. When I say it has been broached, it is that the presidents of the region are interested in learning Cuba's view on this. This is without knowing what definite solution Honduras has presented. Honduras has expressed an interest... [pauses] has expressed its desire to find a solution, and to me the most important thing is that, in this desire to find a solution, Honduras has not hesitated to learn what we Cubans think.

Cuba will accept any option, through legally established means, in which we can find solutions to conflicts such as those we have been discussing. Very interesting proposals are circulating in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Mexico. I think these are solutions that will be helpful once they are definitely evaluated.

What I have liked the most is that, no matter what the topic has been, no final solutions have been discussed without first learning what we Cubans think. We did not go into any details at the meeting in terms of what would be the final solution proposed by Honduras.

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Regarding the second topic, I did not come to discuss the establishment of diplomatic relations. The president and I have not discussed this topic. Diplomatic relations is an act that is established and take place at a moment when they come naturally. In turn, they come about naturally when other levels of communication exist. I believe that what moved me to come here is what I said at the beginning, that I believe that what is advancing very smoothly and sincerely is the exchange of communication, which one day will evolve into the establishment of diplomatic relations. Nevertheless, I did not come here for this. It is not, therefore, part of the agenda. The agenda contains many things to be learned before we can think of a more formal act. I will go even further: We believe that the formal act is required only when many things that justify it exist.

[Station reporter] Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina's reply has been categorical. He has just told journalists that the topic of establishing an embassy in this country was not discussed with President Carlos Roberto Reina. Here is another question by a colleague.

[Reporter, in progress] ...Cuba to make countries aware, such as Honduras, of Cuba's reality?

[Robaina] There is a difference between the visits to Costa Rica, Honduras, and the rest of the countries. In the other countries a link exists. Many agreements have been signed, and there are other advances in the field of economics. Nevertheless, I believe there is one similarity in my visits to all of the countries. Our concern is that anyone who makes the analysis that Honduras will make today—whether an analysis by the press, public opinion, and so on—and whenever Cuba is discussed, Cuba should be evaluated not only according to what others say about Cuba, but that the point of view of the Cubans must also be taken into consideration.

To simply contribute to this is what we have tried to accomplish. For this, and at some time in the future, it will be useful for the Honduran Foreign Ministry officials, and especially for the president, to see what plans we have, as well as to see how we have begun our transformation process. In fact, Ernesto has referred to a process that Cuba has been facing, and he has learned of this process after we have had this [words indistinct]. This is what Cuba has had. For clarity's sake, Cuba does not want you to share our point of view. Cuba has not asked anyone to believe us, and we have asked no one to agree with us. All we are asking is that if the issue of Cuba is discussed with fairness, it is important to learn what Cubans think. This is the fundamental reason behind the need to raise the awareness we spoke about.

[Station reporter] You have heard Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina's reply. Here is another question.

[Reporter, in progress] ...the degree of danger in this relationship or this rapprochement with Cuba by our government, taking into account U.S. interests?

[Station reporter] This is Voz de Honduras at the news conference at the Presidential Palace, and here is the reply from Honduran Foreign Minister Dr. Ernesto Paz Aguilar.

[Paz Aguilar, in progress] ...as the president just said, sometimes changes take place, but the minds do not change with the events. This is a historic test and an act in Honduras' international relations, through which we are attempting to recover something that we lost in the past. I believe that this act distinguishes the government of the moral revolution, and we are convinced that we are historically correct. Second, we believe that it is a commitment of Latin American unity to contribute to resolving some of the problems that Cuba suffers.

The United States and Cuba have common problems. We are friends of the United States, and we want to again be friends of Cuba. We no longer have enemies. Honduras has no enemies at the international level. We have an open door policy. The Cold War has ended, and we believe that we should act with responsibility and with devotion to the principles we have preached and the principles the president of the Republic has preached throughout his powerful public career.

[Reporter] Cuban Foreign Minister [words indistinct] of Voz de Honduras. We have just heard our foreign minister say our country has no enemies and that our country [words indistinct] or for Cuba. I would like to know if you discussed the democratization of your country with Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina. When will elections be held in your country in order that there can be real freedom there? When will your country be [words indistinct] international organizations that have been formed recently. We know that in your country there is cultural and technological development, and yet, there is no social justice. Poverty is the first thing that [word indistinct] your country.

[Robaina] Some of your questions are not questions. They are opinions that could be an answer to other questions made. Anyway, we wish to be open-minded and broad.

One of the issues we broached was understanding. You must not only become aware of what is happening in Cuba, but you must also understand our situation. I regret that some of your questions about our country show a complete lack of knowledge of it. I understand why this has happened, because information about my country has been manipulated and twisted by other viewpoints. If we wish to live in an open world, then we must be open and accept those viewpoints.

The process of democratization in Cuba was not a topic broached with the president, because I believe the president has information he needs to know what is happening. Cuba's democratic system is not perfect. It has nothing to do with the situation throughout Latin America because, unfortunately, [words indistinct].

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The Honduran foreign minister has said Honduras has no enemies. Honduras can simply practice its economic, social, political, and democratic policies as widely as it wishes. Unfortunately, my country cannot. My country has many friends—many, many, friends that have helped it survive under these circumstances. Nevertheless, it does not have a superpower that is willing to talk to Cuba and tell Cuba how it should do certain things. There is a large difference between the way the empire speaks to us and the way the rest of America speaks to us. None of the presidents I have met with has used the language the United States uses. The language the United States uses is very much like your question, which is unlike the language used during my meeting with the president.

I like the kind of question you asked, because it is the type of question that gives me the opportunity to explain our viewpoint.

[Reporter] What about elections?

[Robaina] Cuba has had elections. Our elections differ substantially from the elections you have here. Cuba is the only country that has this type of election. A country talks about building and working along a specific path, just like any other country does. This pluralistic world ensures every country's right to do this. However, the only country that has not ensured this right is Cuba, because it is being done just 90 miles from the empire.

I believe that a more appropriate question would have been: How are elections held in Cuba? For the past 22 years we have had elections in Cuba. We have elections all the time. Our present parliament was chosen in an election. You may share our views, or you may not. I am not here to force you to share my views. I just came here to say that we have a system. It may not be perfect, and, furthermore, it will not be perfect because [words indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] diplomatic relations in the near term. He has also said that before any decision on Cuba is made, the Cuban people's views should be taken into consideration. He also said you will accept [word indistinct] countries take through legal channels. Costa Rica has announced it will accept Cubans who have relatives living in the country. Is it true you have asked the presidents of Costa Rica and Honduras not to accept rafters?

[Robaina] That is something the presidents can answer themselves. I have not made such a request first, because the presidents have not asked me whether we agree with what they are going to do. The presidents simply made their decisions prior to my visit. I did not come here for that. It just happens that my visit coincides with this decision that has been made by one government and being studied by another. Nevertheless, I did not come here to ask them not to accept the rafters. We have discussed many things, and the presidents have shown special interest in learning our views on the issue, but we did not discuss things such as who accepts or does not accept, or who requests or does not request.

What I can tell you is this: During the meetings we discussed at length the outcome of the talks, what we expect of the talks, how they are going, and whether there was a possibility of other issues being broached—issues other than the migration issue. That is basically what we have discussed the most, or at least discussed in half of the meetings we have held. All eyes are on the talks that began yesterday in New York.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] that an office is being opened for Cubans who have relatives in Costa Rica. Will the same be done in Honduras?

[Robaina] [Words indistinct] this issue. The Costa Rican Government made its decision before my meeting with them. President Figueres and I broached other issues. The actual procedures are being discussed at foreign ministry level. I believe that the decision made by Costa Rica is now in its final stages. I am speaking about the actual implementation of the decision.

We have not talked with Honduras about opening an office. We have discussed the government's views on this. The Honduran Government wanted to hear about what Costa Rica and Mexico did and then present its own solution. However, I repeat, more important than opening an office is deciding how many people will be accepted and what can or cannot be done. I view this as a channel of communications that has opened. I believe that the way in which Costa Rica reacted was very interesting. It chose to open channels for talks with the Cuban Government. By doing so in this manner, the Costa Ricans have shown that they respect the way the Cubans think. This is something we praise.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] Latin American countries. Did you discuss your return to the OAS, for example? Economically, this has affected Cuba.

[Robaina] I have not discussed the issue of the OAS. I have discussed the issue of Cuba's integration into Latin America, and this is something that does not necessarily have to go through the OAS. We have nothing against this going through the OAS. We were expelled from that organization a long time ago for reasons you all know about—reasons that I believed were unjustified at that time and continue to be unjustified today, more than 30 years later.

The issue of whether Cuba will or will not return to the OAS is very delicate. Before Cuba does, an agreement would have to be reached [words indistinct] Cuba's return to the OAS.

This was not an issue discussed, because I am seeking a different form of integration that would allow us to get to know one another better. Whether Cuba returns to the OAS [words indistinct]. What I am attempting to do is to

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open channels. I believe that once the channels are open, we can discuss any topic despite its complexity or difficulty.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] however, did you decide on a future meeting between Honduran and Cuban officials? Did you discuss the possibility of a trade opening? I know this is not easy, but has a possible meeting in the future between Honduran and Cuban officials, or even the presidents of the two countries, been decided on to reestablish relations between the countries?

[Robaina] No one undertakes a mission like the one I have undertaken to watch it fall apart the same day. That would be senseless. Officials must work hard before presidents meet. It would not be the first time the presidents have met. They met in Cartagena, and they may meet again at other international sessions.

Ernesto and I are constantly seeing each other, and soon we will hold a long meeting. We will both be at the United Nations at the same time. He has his plans and I have mine, and I do believe that at the Foreign Ministry level these meetings can be successful.

I also wish to add that economic ties have nothing do with diplomatic relations or the future of those relations. You all know that Cuban sports instructors are here in Honduras. Everyone agrees that they are highly qualified people and do a very good job. We are also cooperating in other areas. I believe that even though Cuba is lacking many things, fuel, oil, and raw materials, as well as access to other markets, it has many other things it can offer. In the world of education culture, biotechnology, and medicine, Cuba has much to offer. In the world of human resources, we are very wealthy.

[Reporter] I would like some information, about which I need to ask the Honduran foreign minister a question. What do you think about [words indistinct]?

[Paz Aguilar] [Words indistinct] the foreign minister to continue with these meetings that were scheduled some time ago. We will also meet with other officials at various levels [words indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] the Honduran Government is asking—not to use the word demanding—that the Cuban Government, before it makes a decision regarding the policy to be followed in regard to Cuba?

[Paz Aguilar] There are no reasons for demands. These are simply rapprochement meetings with the countries involved, and involved in one way or another, in a problem that has been created in the Caribbean. Recently, a representative of the Cuban-American community, Simon Ferro, visited us. He was well received in this country. He met with the president and Foreign Ministry officials. We heard his views on a problem that has much to do with Cuba's future. Today's visit by the Cuban foreign minister is part of this round of talks and rapprochement that our government is conducting in the hope of making the best and most appropriate decision.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] meet with a Honduran businessman who has investments in Cuba in the next few hours. Will you be meeting with him? Will you also comment on Cuba's support for Honduras' plan to get a seat on the UN Security Council? Why does Cuba support Honduras? Does Cuba believe Honduras should be a member of the UN Security Council?

[Robaina] If Honduras' membership depended solely on Cuban support, it would be great. However, Honduras needs more than just Cuba's support. As far as some people are concerned, we are explosive. Approaching Cuba could have meant a serious problem for Honduras. We are not that important, and our decision will not make that great of a difference. What Honduras is doing by taking on this responsibility is something it deserves because it has worked and has the prestige. Cuba supports Honduras and believes that America's voice will be very well represented by Honduras. Honduras has worked hard and deserves it. This is what Cuba supports, and remember, Cuba is not alone in this. Many other countries share our views. [words indistinct] you know we are taking rapprochement steps [words indistinct] contacts with businessmen and government representatives, [words indistinct] businessmen, academicians, and politicians who are interested in trade with Cuba.

[Reporter] Mr. Foreign Minister, one last question. Is there any chance that Fidel Castro will visit our country now that the doors of friendship have opened here in Honduras?

[Robaina] [Words indistinct] for Fidel to visit Honduras and President Reina to visit Havana. I believe the possibilities are quite remote because of the present situation. I also believe that a presidential visit is the result of work in other areas and must follow a great deal of progress in relations between two countries. The doors have opened not only for people, they have also opened to communication between Cuba and Honduras. There is always the possibility, but a president does not travel just because [words indistinct].

Honduras Considering Clinton's Personal Request on Cuban Rafters

PA0309042594 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0030 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 2 Sep (ACAN-EFE)—An official source has confirmed that U.S. President Bill Clinton today asked Honduras to accept an undetermined number of rafters fleeing from Cuba at the exact moment when Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Roberto Robaina arrived in Tegucigalpa.

Honduran Foreign Affairs Minister Ernesto Paz Aguilar said the U.S. Government proposal was made official through a note sent by Clinton himself to Honduran

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President Carlos Roberto Reina. The Honduran Government had already expressed its willingness to host at least 5,000 Cuban rafters on the Swan Islands, 700 km from Tegucigalpa off this Central American nation's Caribbean coast.

As Paz Aguilar became aware of the official U.S. request, he pointed out that "Honduras will make its official position known" within the next few days.

The Honduran foreign minister stressed that there are various "opinions" on the rafters issue, because "we cannot host refugees on terra firma given the prevailing socio-economic conditions in Hondurans." Paz Aguilar added: "We have energy and running water problems, and we must take these into account before making a final decision."

The United States pledged to pay all of the expenses incurred in hosting rafters in Honduras, Paz Aguilar reported, denying that the United States will resolve the country's energy crisis in exchange.

"The international community appreciates Honduras' humanitarian gesture of helping resolve the crises of countries such as Cuba and Haiti," he stressed. Honduran authorities had accepted a previous U.S. request to host some 5,000 Haitian refugees, but the Caribbean people never arrived.

Reina Holds News Conference on Cuban Refugees, Other Issues

PA0309042694 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 0223 GMT 3 Sep 94

[News conference by Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina with unidentified reporters in Tegucigalpa; monitored in progress—live relay]

[Text] [Reina] ...because in the Cold War context this would have resulted in a great crisis. What the Honduran people should do is eradicate from their minds the idea of the Cold War. The Cold War is over. The inter-American system must solve the Cuban problem, but what we have right now is a request from various countries that we allow Cuban refugees to come to Honduras. We will study this carefully. We wanted to [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Will you establish trade relations with Cuba? Has Honduras been asked to do this?

[Reina] This issue has not been discussed.

[Reporter] Mr. President, in reference to the Haitian refugees and the Cuban refugees, have you been asked to accept them?

[Reina] Yes, I have been asked to accept them.

[Reporter] Mr. President, on another important issue—economics. A consensus was apparently found between the executive branch and the business sector in the meeting today with businessmen.

[Reina] Of course. I was pleased to hear the president of the Chamber of Commerce and the COHEP [Honduran Council for Private Enterprise] say they will support most of the measures we have presented. They are simply economic measures so the country may emerge with renewed strength and face the difficult situation in which we found it. Some people claim these are the same economic measures. You may compare, in good faith, the procedure followed right now to the one followed in the past. What procedure was followed last time? They presented a bill at midnight and approved it before anyone found out. We have been seeking a convergence, meaning a joint opinion, a consensus among all the different sectors for months. This morning COHEP approved most of the bill. Some adjustments must be made, but generally speaking they support it.

[Reporter] Mr. President, do you still have to meet with deputies from the Liberal Party of Honduras?

[Reina] Yes, that is merely a procedure because I have been talking with the deputies. I want to have the best relations with them.

I want to ask you a favor. The news from the border with El Salvador has been completely misconstrued. Discua sent journalists to clear up the matter. Neverthelesss, the rumors continue. I beg you to verify any news on this so we do not incur any deception because someone is secretly trying to damage our country.

[Reporter] Mr. President, the information came from the Republic of El Salvador. It is said the defense minister revealed the information.

[Reina] I think this is bad information. The president is the highest spokesman for a Republic. President Calderon Sol has asserted: First we must proceed with the border's delimitation. That is a national goal. That was good news, but it has been misconstrued. I formally told him: We will proceed with the demarcation, and we will have close relations with all the Central American countries.

[Reporter] Mr. President, another important issue has also been discussed in Honduras, meaning the lack of consensus between the Armed Forces and the executive branch—above all dealing with libel cases. It was reported Castro Cabus [adviser to the Armed Forces commander in chief] had made some charges against Walter Lopez Reyes. You later met with them and apparently settled everything. Could you tell us what the situation is?

[Reina] What you said is exactly what happened. I saw they were being led to a conflict. They are two extremely distinguished military officers. One was accused of saying something he never said. We got them together, the situation was cleared up, and they embraced. Someone is interested in creating disagreement between them, and they were being led into a confrontation. I

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tried to solve the situation—first because it is my duty and second because we must make sure no harm is done to our country.

[Reporter] Was it cleared up simply because Brigadier General Castro Cabus said he had not said such a thing? Or did he present some solid argument?

[Reina] What I mean is that one of them was told the other one had said something, and he replied in kind. This led to a vicious circle. They talked things over, embraced, and settled the issue fraternally, as all Hondurans should settle their issues.

[Reporter] Nevertheless, the case has not been fully investigated, Mr. President. What is the status of this case?

[Reina] The case is closed. Everything has been investigated.

[Reporter] Were the corruption charges finally filed today? Is it a specific incident, documents on a specific case of corruption?

[Reina] Yes, it is on my desk and you will soon hear about this.

Reina Says Presidents To Issue Declaration on Cubans 'Soon'

PA0309170594 Paris AFP in Spanish 1534 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 3 Sep (AFP)—Following the end of a visit to Honduras by Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, President Carlos Roberto Reina announced today several Central American presidents will soon issue a declaration on the acceptance of Cuban "rafters."

Although he did not say which countries will receive the refugees, Reina told journalists that Honduras is deciding, after listening to statements by Simon Ferro, leader of the Cuban community in Miami, and by Foreign Minister Robaina on 1 and 2 September, the number of refugees it will accept.

The United States made a formal request this week asking the Honduran Government to receive Cuban rafters.

Reina explained figures have not been discussed yet, but Foreign Minister Ernesto Paz believes Honduras might receive approximately 5,000 Cubans.

Reina described Robaina's two-day visit as positive. It helps, he said, "to divert the minds of Hondurans from the context of the Cold War."

General Luis Alonso Discua, the Honduran Armed Forces chief who attended a reception in honor of Robaina the night of 1 September, has said the Cuban foreign minister came on a courtesy call, "because Honduras has committed itself to accepting the Cubans, and the Armed Forces support any decision President Reina makes in this regard."

Robaina said during a news conference on 1 September he came to Honduras to convey the position of the Castro government on problems in Cuba, and he explained an eventual resumption of diplomatic relations with Honduras, which have been suspended since 1962, was not among the topics discussed with Reina.

Meanwhile, the Governments of Costa Rica and Guatemala have already announced they will only receive Cubans who have relatives already living in those countries. In addition, Panama has agreed to accept, under U.S. expense and responsibility, 10,000 rafters at U.S. military bases in the Canal area.

Nicaragua and El Salvador have rejected so far the possibility of receiving any refugees due to their critical situation following a decade of civil wars.

Government Denies Troops Harassing Salvadorans

PA0609034094 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0150 GMT 6 Sep 94

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 5 Sep (DPA)—The Honduran Government denied that "Salvadoran citizens who remain in Honduran territory" are being harassed, according to a communique issued today by the presidency's press office.

The communique also denied that Honduran military forces are raiding the former areas in dispute between Honduras and El Salvador, which the International Court of Justice granted to Hondurans in a ruling issued on 11 September 1992.

The Honduran Presidency communique observed that Honduran troops have on the contrary been withdrawn from the border area and sent to the interior.

There have been charges in El Salvador that the Salvadoran citizens who remain in Honduran territory are being harassed. Those charges have prompted Salvadoran military leaders to announce that they will move troops to the area bordering with Honduras.

On the movement of Salvadoran troops to the border area, the communique issued by the Honduran Presidency asserted that it is "unaware" of any troop movements and, if they have occurred, it believes they were "absolutely unnecessary."

The Honduran Government maintains that the lack of demarcation of the border, which has been clearly defined, prompts "misunderstandings." It, thus, urged that the demarcation work be completed. To avoid a vacuum in the control of the area, the Honduran Government proposed the creation of a border post to control commercial activity and impose order in the area.

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Nicaragua

Government Protests FAA Decision Restricting Plane Access

PA0309194194 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 3 Sep 94 pp 1, 10

[Report by Carlos Garcia Castillo]

[Text] Nicaragua filed a protest to the United States over a decision by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to restrict the access of planes from nine different Latin American and African nations to U.S. territory, including Nicaragua.

The restriction was issued, because these countries do not meet international safety standards according to the results of an investigation conducted in more than 100 countries.

The measure took by surprise the Nicaraguan Government, which described, through Raul Leclair, deputy construction and transportation minister, the decision yesterday as "unilateral and serious," because it "hurts Nicaragua's patriotic feelings and international image," the official said.

"The damage done to Nicaragua is obvious, because it creates doubts about us and creates international mistrust regarding our capability to provide safety for international flights," Leclair said.

According to the decision made by the U.S. civil aviation authorities, nine countries—the Dominican Republic, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Uruguay, Gambia, Ghana, and Zaire—do not have adequately developed civil aviation supervision to comply with the norms of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Federico Pena had said in a news conference the FAA criticisms are primarily aimed at the safety norms applied by these countries.

According to the FAA, the adversely affected countries, including Nicaragua, have serious problems with the training of their pilots, airplane maintenance, and they have problems with qualified personnel.

Nicaragua: It is a Serious Blow

Raul Leclair, Nicaraguan deputy construction and transportation minister, said the FAA decision is a "low and serious blow" to Nicaragua, because it is based on a 1992 inspection.

"That inspection, according to Leclair, was conducted for different purposes. It was requested by Nica Airlines to obtain approval to begin operations, but we were never warned about the intentions to issue a report in this regard," according to Leclair, who said they were going to pay a visit to U.S. Ambassador John Maisto yesterday "to file the Nicaraguan protest."

The official said Nicaragua wants the FAA to conduct another investigation in Nicaragua that can take into account the efforts the country has made to overcome the deficiencies that existed in the past in air safety, he said.

Nica Airlines Will Continue To Fly

Leclair said the measure will in no way adversely affect the airlines that are serving international routes to, from, or through Nicaragua. The measure will not adversely affect the service provided between Nicaragua and the United States by Nica Airlines, a diverse company owned by El Salvador's Taca Airlines and the Nicaraguan Government, but it could create prejudice in the future against airline industry activity in our country.

Meanwhile, Mario Medrano, general manager of Nica Airlines, said the measure "does not adversely affect our national airline at all, because what the report states is that the Nicaraguan Civil Aeronautics Office does not have the capability to supervise Nica Airlines."

Serious Consequences

The official said Nica Airlines is registered and authorized by the FAA. Its pilots, mechanics, and the rest of its personnel have FAA permits. Medrano said the national airline has the capability and experience to operate responsibly.

"The FAA decision will most certainly have serious consequences for Nicaragua's international image. We are extremely concerned about that point," Leclair said.

Nicaragua is on a blacklist of countries that are incapable of providing the minimum air safety standards, specialists in the field have said.

President Approves Military Law Approved by Parliament

PA0309010494 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2312 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Managua, 2 Sep (ACAN-EFE)—Today Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro sanctioned the Military Law recently approved by the Nicaraguan parliament that sets General Humberto Ortega's retirement as head of the Army for 21 February 1995.

The law, which has 94 articles, was approved by the National Assembly on 23 August, after two months of debate and after the executive and the top military command reached an agreement that ended the crisis that had started a year ago, when Chamorro announced Gen. Ortega's retirement.

The president signed the new military law at a discreet act in her presidential office, in the presence of Gen. Ortega and members of the Army command staff, as well as several ministers, including Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo.

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"My wish and that of all Nicaraguans to have a National Army has come true; we will work for the good of our fatherland and to further reconciliation," Chamorro said a few minutes after she signed the text of the Military Law.

The Higher Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) had requested that President Chamorro not sign the Military Law, saying that it will not contribute to democratization in Nicaragua.

"Well, but I am the president right now," she answered concisely when asked by a reporter about the private businessmen's request.

The law establishes three fundamental points related to the organization, jurisdiction, and social security of the Nicaraguan Armed Forces.

Panama

Foreign Minister Denies Cuban Refugees To Arrive 2 Sep

PA0209170794 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 2 Sep 94 p A-1

[Article by A. Sanchez Belisle]

[Text] Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo said yesterday that it is untrue that a group of 2,500 Cuban refugees were scheduled to arrive in Panama today as part of a cooperation agreement with the United States.

The Panamanian Government has no problem with allowing Cuban refugees to arrive in Panama, Lewis Galindo said during the inauguration ceremony for Dr. Ernesto Perez Balladares, the country's new president.

"We are going to receive the Cuban refugees as a humanitarian gesture when the case comes up," Lewis Galindo said.

The "rafters'" case was discussed yesterday by Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, president of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, who also attended the swearing-in ceremony for Dr. Perez Balladares. The crisis involving the Cuban "rafters" will only be resolved through a negotiation of the immigration problem between the United States and Cuba," Pena Gomez said. [punctuation as published] The talks should take "the Cuban community abroad" into consideration, Pena Gomez said. Both Cuban President Fidel Castro and the U.S. Government "must understand" the need to hold negotiations to end the inhumane exodus of Cubans in flimsy rafts, Pena Gomez added. During the bilateral talks Cuba must consider a "political opening," and the United States an end to the trade "embargo," which has greatly hurt the Cuban population, Pena Gomez added.

Colombian President Ernesto Samper and Costa Rican President Jose Figueres also met in Panama yesterday and discussed the "rafters" fleeing Cuba.

Foreign Minister To Be Summoned To Explain Cubans' Arrival

PA0309192294 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1730 GMT 3 Sep 94

[From the "Day to Day" newscast]

[Text] The plenum of the Legislative Assembly has approved the summoning of Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo to explain the terms of the agreement authorizing the arrival of 10,000 Cubans in Panama.

The writ of summons for Foreign Minister Lewis Galindo was approved by a unanimous vote, including the support of the Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD]. Opposition legislators believe it is necessary for the legislative branch to know about the details of the agreement that will be signed with the United States for the arrival of Cubans in Panama:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] [Words indistinct] we are all humans, and we must love our neighbor as good Christians; from that aspect, we Panamanians are characterized by our generosity. It would be wise, however, for the legislative branch to be consulted on this matter and for the views of Panamanians to be heard in order to make a wise decision. [end recording]

The PRD has expressed its surprise over the objections made by opposition parties regarding a decision they had adopted in the Haitian case when they were in power:

[Begin PRD Legislator Gerardo Gonzalez recording] The government of Perez Balladares has considered accepting the arrival of Cubans in Panama for merely humanitarian reasons. President Perez Balladares has announced and explained this issue, but Cubans will not come to Panama as refugees; they will be confined to U.S. military bases. [end recording]

Government Signs Agreement With U.S. To Accept Cubans

PA0309225094 Paris AFP in Spanish 2041 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Excerpt] Panama City, 3 Sep (AFP)—Official sources announced today that approximately 10,000 Cuban rafters arrive next week in Panama, where they will be housed in camps located at U.S. military bases along the Panama Canal, per an agreement signed today between the government of Ernesto Perez Balladares and the Clinton administration.

Panamanian Foreign Ministry sources told journalists that the first phase of Operation Safe Haven will begin Monday [4 September] when the first 2,500 Cubans are scheduled to arrive at Howard Air Force Base from the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The sources reported that the refugees will immediately be taken to the Empire Range military camp, 15 km southwest of Panama City.

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Army tents and latrines were rapidly being installed today at Empire Range—a site once used as a prison, following the U.S. invasion that toppled Manuel Noriega in December 1989, to detain Panamanian civilians and military personnel who supported the Noriega regime.

After the previous Panamanian Government of Guillermo Endara rejected a U.S. request to give refuge to Haitian and Cuban emigrants, President Perez Balladares, who was sworn in on Thursday, agreed to receive the rafters "for humanitarian reasons." Perez Balladares and U.S. envoys spent five days negotiating an agreement, under which the Panamanian Government accepted the Cubans' arrival with the condition that Washington would be responsible for all costs incurred in housing the rafters for a period not to exceed six months.

Today, Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo called a news conference to announce the agreement with Washington, which was signed just days after President Perez Balladares announced his decision to reestablish full diplomatic relations with Cuba. Since the U.S. invasion, relations between Panama and Cuba had been limited to commercial ties only.

Lewis Galindo explained that the agreement "establishes where the Cubans will be housed, as well as their legal status in Panama," and that the U.S. Armed Forces has guaranteed "the rafters' sustenance, security, medical attention, and education" under the supervision of the UNHCR. The foreign minister also warned that the Cubans will not be allowed to make contact with the Panamanian population, and he added that they will not be allowed to leave U.S. military bases. [passage omitted]

News Conference on Acceptance of Cuban Refugees

PA0409185294 Panama City Radio and Television Networks in Spanish 1600 GMT 4 Sep 94

[News Conference by Panamanian Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo, Government and Justice Minister Raul Montenegro, Labor and Social Welfare Minister Mitchell Doens, Adviser Romulo Bethancourt, Engineer Juan Antonio Stagg, and "others" at the Foreign Ministry in Panama City; the moderator is Presidency Press Secretary Mario Velazquez—live]

[Text] [Lewis Galindo] Good morning. The reason for this news conference is to inform the country of the decision by Dr. Ernesto Perez Balladares, constitutional president of the Republic of Panama, with the support of his entire administration, to receive in our territory 10,000 Cubans who have been rescued from the sea, to whom we will provide adequate conditions of personal security. These Cuban citizens will remain in areas that are under U.S. Army control. This is a humanitarian effort to help these brothers who are confronting difficulties. The Panamanian people are noble and very humanitarian, and we know they will support this action. The request was made by President Bill Clinton in a personal letter to President Ernesto Perez Balladares, in which he called for our help during this difficult time.

I believe relations with the United States should be conducted with considerable dignity, mutual respect and very harmoniously, because the United States and Panama are partners in a firm that is of vital importance to the world and which, thank God, has been rescued by the Torrijos-Carter treaties.

In the year 2000, the canal facilities will become our country's exclusive property. We will be hearing from Engineer Juan Antonio Stagg, Panama's representative in the joint committee created by the Torrijos-Carter treaties, which is the mechanism used to respond positively to this noble action ordered by President Perez Balladares.

I would like you to know that here with us today are members of the talks committee urgently established to support Mr. Stagg during his talks with U.S. representatives, with whom an arrangement would be achieved. This arrangement, as you will see during Engineer Stagg's presentation, contains all of the details referent to this operation. Also to speak are the distinguished attorneys Dr. Romulo Escobar Bethancourt, who presided over the committee, Ricardo Alberto Arias, Panama's ambassador-designate to Washington, and Dr. Adolfo Ahumada, the foreign minister's personal adviser.

On President Perez Balladares' behalf, I would like to thank the committee, which worked tirelessly for approximately 16 hours to achieve this arrangement and which put Panama's interests first.

We were not going to be involved in a humanitarian action that would somehow affect our people negatively. Our people's interests come first in any action taken by this government.

Messrs. newsmen, here is Engineer Stagg.

[Stagg] Good morning. As the foreign minister said, I will gladly give you all the information used as a basis for the agreement signed yesterday at the DEPAT [Panama Treaty Affairs Executive Directorate] offices in Fort Amador between Colonel O'Connor, co-chairman of the Joint Committee on behalf of the United States, and myself, co-chairman of the Joint Committee on behalf of Panama.

So that you can follow what I am going to be reading, here is a map.

Objectives of the document that was signed. For humanitarian reasons, the Government of the Republic of Panama has authorized the U.S. Government to use areas under its military control to receive a maximum of 10,000 Cuban nationals who are being rescued at sea in order to provide them with conditions for their adequate protection and personal security.

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1. Legal foundation for that which was signed: Article 1 of the agreement for the implementation of Article 4 of the Panama Canal Treaty, which states that the areas and installations that the Republic of Panama allows U.S. forces to use can be used for specific purposes mentioned in the Panama Canal Treaty or as otherwise agreed by the two governments.

2. Paragraphs 1d and 2 of the agreement on certain U.S. activities in the Republic of Panama, which state that the United States can carry out humanitarian operations in sites agreed upon with the Republic of Panama.

3. Paragraph 4 of the agreement on certain U.S. activities in the Republic of Panama, which allows, through the Joint Committee, the two countries to introduce changes or variants in activities previously mentioned and authorized.

Conditions agreed upon:

1. Because of humanitarian reasons, the Cuban nationals mentioned in this operation will be provided with adequate and dignified living conditions including food, health, education, and recreation. The Cuban nationals will undergo medical tests to determine that they do not have any infectious diseases.

2. Cuban nationals received here will remain in the assigned places for a maximum period of six months.

3. The U.S. Government will pay for the costs incurred. In no case will the Panamanian Government be obliged or have to pay for any expense related with the operation in question.

4. Compliance with Article 8 of the Implementation Treaty on purchases from the Republic of Panama will be observed.

The United States has pledged to relocate the Cuban nationals on its own and paying all the expenses, in an area outside the Republic of Panama's territory within a period no greater than six months. The U.S. Government will be the only one in charge of the overall security, order, and discipline of the Cuban nationals during all the phases of this humanitarian operation.
7. [numberical sequence as heard] The Cuban nationals will be restricted to the area selected for their location.
8. All activities concerning this humanitarian operation will be performed according to the terms and conditions stipulated in the Panama Canal Treaties and their subsequent agreements.
9. The United Nations and the Panama National Human Rights Commission will be asked to take the necessary measures to supervise the development of this humanitarian operation.
10. The coordination and implementation of the provisions agreed on for this operation will be made through the Joint Committee, as stipulated by the treaties.

Features of the Area:

1. Temporary lodging located around Empkre Range in the area known as (?Pie) Range, under the military control of the U.S. Armed Forces, far away from populated areas. Later, we will show you maps to ensure that you will be able to see the exact location and the erection of these camps.
2. A reception center located at Howard Air Force Base. Cubans will arrive at Howard Air Force Base, and from there, they will be taken by land to their respective camps.
3. Four camps will be used for temporarily lodging, with approximately 2,500 Cuban nationals per camp.
4. One field hospital.
5. A camp with a capacity for 100 misbehaving Cuban citizens.
6. An information center for journalists and relatives of the Cuban nationals.
7. A military chaplain will offer religious services.

Each camp has an area of 10 hectares—25 acres—with capacity for 255 tents, which can house 14 people each, with concrete flooring, potable water, and electricity. A medical clinic with on- site doctors will be installed in each camp, and a kitchen providing three daily warm meals will also be installed in each camp [words indistinct]. There will be 112 outhouses at the camps, shower stalls for men and women, areas to wash clothes, game courts, and security fences.

Operation costs: total costs are estimated at some 35 million [currency not specified].

Here [points to location on map] we can appreciate the first camp that is being erected by working 24 hours a day.

You can already see here the tents that have been installed. These white rectangles are the concrete floors that will be used to pitch more tents. The dining and hospital facilities will be in this area. This camp is the one to be occupied first. Is that all? With this, I finish my explanation. The only other interesting information I can give you is that the activities taking place there have already meant employment for Panamanian citizens. Some 200 Panamanians will have permanent employment during the operation. Thank you.

[Unidentified station reporter] Mr. Stagg has just concluded his presentation. Stagg participated in the negotiations of the Joint Committee. The foreign minister is now speaking.

[Lewis Galindo] I want to note that Labor and Social Welfare Minister Mitchel Doens is also here. During the question and answer period, he will be able to explain to you that it is impossible for Cuban nationals to affect the Panamanian labor force.

We are also accompanied by Government and Justice Minister Raul Montenegro, who will tell you about the vigilance that we will share with U.S. authorities to make sure that the Cubans who are rescued from the sea will

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remain within the areas assigned to them. I now yield the floor to Dr. Romulo Escobar Bethancourt and the other gentlemen who participated in the negotiations yesterday.

[Escobar Bethancourt] Good morning. I will speak briefly because I understand that reporters want to ask their questions. Basically, yesterday, we attended the meeting to back the work of Mr. Stagg, co-chairman in the Joint Committee. I want to inform you that prior to that meeting, informal talks were held with U.S. Government representatives.

You might recall that the reception of the 10,000 Cubans in Panama is no surprise because the president, when he was president-elect, announced his decision to contribute to the humanitarian effort to help the Cubans. He made the announcement in Panama, reiterated it in Europe, and reaffirmed it in his meeting with President Clinton in the United States.

Consequently, the convocation of the Joint Committee meeting was just the result of a decision by President Ernesto Perez Balladares to carry out what he had been announcing prior to his inauguration.

This means that when we arrived at the negotiating table, we did not arrive with empty hands. On the contrary, we had previously sent a memorandum to the U.S. Government representatives, in which we established the basic points under which we would sign an agreement. We sent this memorandum outlining the basic points because, following our government's instructions, we did not believe the project that the U.S. Government had presented was advisable. Originally, this project was kind of a final agreement. The nine points we outlined in the memorandum are included in the copies of the agreement we distributed to you.

The meeting addressed the development of those nine points. In what sense? Going through each one of the nine points outlined in the memorandum. The Republic of Panama's interests regarding the protection, as the foreign minister already said, for the jobs available to Panamanians—the labor minister will explain this issue in detail later—were taken into account in the agreement we signed yesterday. We guaranteed the issue of security, which you will be able to read in the agreement and which the government will detail later. A very important aspect is that Panama was willing to host Cubans if the U.S. guaranteed that those Cubans were going to be treated and housed with dignity and respect, and their health, education, recreation, and religious activities were going to be taken care of.

The agreement also includes a basic issue: only the United States will pay the expenses incurred during the operation, from the beginning until the end, and Panama will not pay a single cent for this operation, not now, not later, and not at the conclusion of the this operation.

These important issues are taken into account, because the agreement is based upon provisions of the Panama Canal Treaties, which allow and authorize the two governments to use the defense sites or those sites under the control of the U.S. Army not only for the specific activities of protecting and defending the canal but also for other purposes that the two governments agree on. Indeed, when the Panama Canal Treaties were signed, those military bases were being used to perform activities that had almost nothing to do with the defense and protection of the canal. These activities were included in the treaties as other types of activities under way.

That is why you will find those articles invoked in the arrangements. You will find that one of those articles deals specifically with humanitarian aid. It even mentions search and rescue operations. However, there is further proof that the bases are not solely for protection and defense. On the list of other activities in the canal treaty, which were already being carried out prior to the treaties and continued thereafter, you will recall the School of the Americas, which was not built for the protection and defense of the canal but to train Latin American army officers.

In addition, there were other activities on the bases, such as the study of the effects of the tropics and others topics that are listed in the treaty. Due to the existence of the Joint Committee, which has the authority, when both governments agree on a topic, to carry out discussions and approvals through memoranda or arrangements and, moreover, because one of the activities specifically mentioned in the treaties is humanitarian aid and that both governments have the authority to reach an agreement on the problem, we developed the topic that culminated with these agreements.

Therefore, the Panamanian Government, by bringing the 10,000 Cubans under the conditions described by the commission's co-president Mr. Stagg, is carrying out a humanitarian effort; it is cooperating with the U.S. Government—as the foreign minister said—in an action aimed at strengthening cooperation and harmonious relations between Panama and the United States. This action has been carried out under the strictest observance of the laws contained in the Panama Canal treaties. We made sure to eliminate ambiguities that could be misinterpreted.

Those agreements are in their hands, and, at the appropriate time, the people who are seated at this table will gladly respond to the questions of the distinguished reporters. Thank you very much.

[Velasquez] Messrs. reporters, the first question goes to Abdiel Gutierrez of Canal Cuatro Television.

[Gutierrez] Thank you, Mr. Velasquez. My question is directed specifically at you, Foreign Minister Lewis. Cuban Foreign Minister Robaina expressed a little disappointment over Panama's decision to accept Cuban refugees. However, this government has expressed an interest in restoring relations with Cuba. Now that this decision has been made, where does it leave relations with Cuba?

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[Lewis Galindo] Nothing will change our conviction that Panama should maintain normal relations with all countries of the world. We have already contacted the Cuban Embassy, and just as Mr. Robaina did not like our statements we did not like his. However, if he says we are meddling in Cuba's internal affairs, he is also meddling in a humanitarian decision made by Panama. None of this will be a hindrance to our maintaining normal relations with Cuba and the other countries on this continent.

[Velasquez] The following question goes to Hitler Cigarruista of La Exitosa radio.

[Cigarruista] Mr. Foreign Minister, first you say this agreement cannot or should not affect Panama's future relations with Cuba. Nevertheless, Fidel Castro did not attend President Ernesto Perez Balladares' inauguration, and, in fact, thus far we do not know the name of the person who will be appointed Cuban ambassador to Panama. Second, what benefit can Panama obtain from the United States, aside from the 200 jobs that were mentioned? We are talking about 10,000 people who have to eat, be clothed, etc. Will there be any benefits for the country's private sector?

[Lewis Galindo] I would like to divide the answer to your question. With regard to Cuba, I will ask Escobar Bethancourt, who has been handling part of this matter with the Cuban officials, to answer you.

As for any economic benefits to Panama, I do not want to mar a beautiful humanitarian gesture with materialistic attitudes. [words indistinct] to the extent that it can be provided here in Panama.

[Escobar Bethancourt] With regard to the Cuban mission, a question posed by the reporter, we want to reaffirm what the foreign minister said. The discrepancies between remarks by the Cuban foreign minister and our position in no way weakens, deteriorates, or affects the intention expressed and carried out by the Panamanian Government to increase the level of relations with Cuba at the diplomatic level they deserve. Proof of this is that Panama has proceeded to appoint our new ambassador to Cuba after almost...[radio and television networks abruptly end coverage of news conference, while it is still in progress].

Preparations Continue for Receiving Cuban Rafters

PA0609024694 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Report by Abdiel Antonio Gutierrez from the "RPC Television News"" newscast]

[Text] At the U.S. military base in Guantanamo, Cuba, time has become endless for the 18,000 Cubans who are expecting to be relocated in Panama, after being picked up on the high seas trying to escape from their fatherland due to political and economic problems.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Southern Command has everything practically ready to receive the so-called rafters at a location known as Empire Range [preceding two words in English], a former air and land shooting range, which is now filled with about 1,500 tents. In this 200-hectare area, about 10,000 Cubans will live for up to six months, according to the agreement between Panamanian and U.S. delegates.

There will be four refugee camps in this location in Nuevo Emperador. The first camp is ready to be occupied.

We are in Camp No. 2, approximately 10 miles from the Inter-American Highway. This camp has been built—what you see now—in just three days. It is expected that it will be completely ready in four days to house approximately 2,500 Cuban refugees.

Canvas tents and concrete floors will house up to 14 people grouped according to sex, age, and family relationship. It involves a great deal of teamwork to install the electrical wiring, to fumigate, and to set up other facilities.

The surroundings are muddy now, but the muddy soil will be covered with several inches of gravel.

[Begin unidentified U.S. Army soldier recording, in English fading into Spanish translation] Approximately 1,000 men are working at this time to set up the camps. In all, there will be 1,290 men involved in this operation. These men come from bases in Panama and some from the United States. [end recording]

This is where the 40-bed hospital is being built. The safe haven operation evidently pursues humanitarian objectives, but its cost should benefit the Panamanian market, where materials and food will be purchased.

[Begin unidentified U.S. Army soldier recording, in English fading into Spanish translation] The total cost of the six-month operation will be approximately $40 million. [end recording]

This represents $21 a day for each Cuban. Regarding the preparations, everything has been said, but the expectation centers around the date and time of arrival of the first group of refugees.

Meanwhile, Howard Air Force Base is fully prepared to receive the Cubans, to classify them, and to transport them to Empire Range. This processing site has a capacity for 500 people, where supplies for babies, as well as recreation areas, have been provided.

According to the agreement with Panama, the United States is committed to making sure the refugees are in good health. The verification of information will be meticulous but, according to U.S. officers, all refugees will receive humane and dignified treatment, under UNHCR supervision.

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The plan of the U.S. military establishes that the Cubans who have been picked up on the high seas will arrive in groups of 250 to 300 people. The U.S. Forces have a fleet of aircraft capable of transporting the refugees in a few days, but their arrival depends upon the progress of the construction of the infrastructure that will house them.

The C-5 Galaxy aircraft is one of the means the U.S. Army may use to transport people and cargo from Guantanamo Base. It has a capacity for about 350 people. Although not usually used for this kind of operation, commercial flights could also be used.

Howard Air Force Base Ready To Receive Cuban Rafters

PA0609025494 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Sep 94

[From the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] We now go to Howard Base, where our colleague Alexandra Ciniglio has the latest details on the arrival of the 10,000 Cuban rafters in Panama. Go ahead, Alexandra:

[Ciniglio] Thank you very much. What you see behind me is Howard Air Force Base in Panama, where the arrival of the first group of Cuban rafters is expected. This first group consists of 2,500 of the 18,000 Cubans presently at Guantanamo military base in Cuba.

Official reports have not yet confirmed the date or time of the arrival of the first group of Cuban refugees.

It was first reported the Cubans would arrive today, but it is now believed they will be arriving tomorrow. U.S. Army sources have neither confirmed nor ruled out the possibility that the first group of Cubans may arrive this evening at Howard Air Force Base.

It has been officially reported that the refugees will fly into Howard Air Force Base, where they will be classified and later transported by land to Cocoli, the former shooting range. There, four camps have been set up to receive 10,000 Cubans.

Panama is the first country to reach an agreement with the United States and reports indicate there is tension in Guantanamo Base between Cuban and Haitian refugees. The Haitians are reportedly complaining the Cubans are receiving preferential treatment.

Dear viewers, we will have more details later on what is taking place at Howard. Please stay tuned.

Opposition Criticizes 'Early Morning Coup' Regarding Cuban Rafters

PA0409220894 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 4 Sep 94 p A-1

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] Ten thousand Cuban rafters will begin arriving in Panama tomorrow, following the negotiation of an agreement by Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo and the United States. The legislative opposition has characterized the agreement as an "early morning coup" [madrugonazo], and the agreement has caused the summoning of Lewis Galindo to a Legislative Assembly plenary session.

A Panamanian team consisting of Lewis Galindo, Romulo Escobar, Adolfo Ahumada, Juan Antonio Tack, and Augusto Zambrano met yesterday with General Barry McCaffrey, Southern Command chief, to coordinate the arrival of the first 2,500 Cubans from Guantanamo.

The transfer of Cubans to Panama has been dubbed "Operation Secure Shelter" and includes the construction of four camps at "Empire Range" at the entrance of Cocoli, an area that was once a Southern Command rifle range and where, it is believed, explosives were buried during World War II.

The Cubans will arrive at Howard Air Force Base where they will be processed by computer, given identification bracelets, and sent to the camps, which are located less than 10 km from the capital.

According to Legislator Alberto Cigarruista, who has proposed the summoning of Foreign Minister Lewis Galindo on 6 or 7 September, it is "inadmissible and disrespectful" for the new government to attempt three days after taking office to stage an "early morning coup" involving the Cuban issue so as to obviate the Assembly's confirmation of that agreement with the United States.

Meanwhile, PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] President Gerardo Gonzalez, who has opposed the granting of refuge to 10,000 Haitians on San Jose Island, has said the decision to accept the Cubans "should come as no surprise." He added the Panamanian people are intelligent and humane enough to understand the rafters' situation.

According to Army South, the Cubans will be "isolated" and controlled by U.S. troops. Each camp will have a "military commander," a health center, and personnel specialized in civilian affairs, linguistics, and public relations.

Each Cuban will receive one cot, sheets, clothes, shoes, and a package of personal hygiene articles. It has been calculated it will cost 3 million balboas a month to run the camps.

The Legislative Assembly has unanimously decided to summon Lewis Galindo, who must explain the terms of the agreement, why the Assembly was not consulted beforehand, and whether the agreement must be confirmed by the legislators.

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According to Legislator Oyden Ortega, a former foreign minister, the Canal treaties establish that Panama must agree to the use of the bases for matters not considered in the treaties; otherwise, the United States may believe it has the authority to do as it pleases.

According to Ortega, Panama must carry out the necessary consultations, with Cuba as well as the United States, so both nations can support Panama's involvement in the issue of the rafters.

Although the proponents of sheltering the Cubans at the military bases are saying the refugees will remain isolated, the Panamanian Human Rights Committee has repeated on various occasions that international treaties on this subject allow freedom of movement to refugees within the territory where they are established.

In addition to sheltering the Cubans, President Ernesto Perez Balladares has announced his willingness to also admit Haitians fleeing from that Caribbean island.

In July, when then President Guillermo Endara had tried to grant refuge to 10,000 Haitians on San Jose Island, protests were staged against the decision.

Cuban Refugee Camp in Panama Called 'Concentration Camp'

PA0509150794 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 5 Sep 94 p 1

[From the "As of Today" column]

[Text] In addition to the formal requirements that any agreement with the United States must necessarily be submitted to establish a temporary refuge on the military bases that exist in the Canal Zone—and we have spoken about this on a number of occasions—there are other problems that would be wise to take into consideration. The Cubans coming to Panama are not doing this of their own free will, considering their goal is to go the United States to establish themselves there. Moreover, they have not asked Panama for diplomatic or political asylum under the terms of the Caracas Agreements, of which, by the way, the United States is not even a signatory. As far as the Geneva Agreement on Political Refugees is concerned, the situation is even more confusing. According to that agreement, the refugees have a right to freedom of movement, to work, to free access to the court system, and in general to all guarantees established under the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights. There is no international agreement applicable to what is being attempted in the case of the Cubans, just as there was none in the case of the Haitians. The refugee camp will be a kind of concentration camp in which they will be detained against their will and denied all rights granted by international agreements. It is regrettable that, without studying the matter carefully, and in light of its importance, the government has impulsively acted to please the United States. Poor Cubans!

Human Rights President: Refugee Measures 'Completely Irregular'

PA0509212094 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 5 Sep 94 p E-24

[Report by Juan Manuel Diaz C.]

[Text] Osvaldo Velasquez, president of the Panamanian Human Rights Committee, has stated that on the basis of international treaties signed by Panama, the Cuban refugees who will arrive in the country today have the right to move about freely, to secure jobs, and to bring their relatives.

Velasquez said that if the national authorities do not grant the Cuban refugees all the guarantees to which they are entitled, Panama could be denounced internationally for this.

Velasquez said that the measures adopted by the United States and the Panamanian authorities to bring the Cuban rafters here are completely irregular, because this is the responsibility of the UNHCR.

Velasquez said that in 1951 and 1967, Panama signed two international treaties on refugees that establish that if the lives of refugees are in danger in their country, they cannot be returned.

He also said that UNHCR observers will visit the country in the next few weeks to evaluate the situation of the Cuban refugees in the camps.

Velasquez said that national laws make it obligatory for the authorities to receive the Cuban refugees and to give them the protection envisaged in the agreements signed by the country.

He said, nevertheless, that it will be necessary to wait and obtain more details as to how the refugees will be treated by the U.S. authorities and noted that the fact that the refugees will stay on U.S. military bases does not free the national authorities of responsibility.

Human Rights, Business Leaders Comment on Plan To Accept Cubans

PA0609033394 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Sep 94

[From the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] Osvaldo Velasquez, president of the Panamanian Human Rights Committee, said today that using the issue of accepting a group of Cuban refugees in our country to negotiate the Panamanian foreign debt would be unjust, because this involves a humanitarian act. Alvaro Alvarado filed this report:

Velasquez made this statement in the wake of international reports indicating that Honduras is conditioning the granting of refuge to a large group of Cubans to a pardoning of part of its foreign debt. This should not happen in our country, he added.

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[Begin Velasquez recording] This involves gaining something or striking a deal at the expense of a situation of desperation and anguish among some people. If Panama wants to help, it should do so by distributing the burden equitably and without expecting any reward. It should help a group of people who needs help. We should feel satisfaction for doing a humanitarian and Christian act, depending on what you wish to call it. [end recording]

There are international agreements stating that all signatories have the obligation to welcome any person seeking refuge if his life is in jeopardy. The country granting asylum must guarantee him—according to these agreements—liberty of movement and the right to employment, health, food, housing, and education without regard to race, creed, or political ideology, among others.

Ricardo Aleman, former president of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture of Panama, voiced his support for the decision to welcome Cubans in our country:

[Begin Aleman recording] The fact that Panama offered itself to welcome refugees from other countries is positive from the humanitarian standpoint. We do not disagree with the way this has been handled jointly with U.S. soldiers at military bases and under their guard and care. [end recording]

The arrival in Panama of Cuban rafters could occur anytime. U.S. authorities have not yet decided when, and there is talk about an investment of $35 million, which will be invested in Panama during the six months that these people will spend in our country.

Various Reactions From People on Decision To Receive Cubans

PA0609033494 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Sep 94

[From the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] The government's decision to grant refuge to Cuban citizens in our country has created various reactions. For some it is a decision made without consultation, for others it is discriminatory, and for most Panamanians, it is simply a humanitarian act, of which Panama could be on the receiving end in the future.

[Begin recording] [First unidentified speaker] It is a humanitarian act, which we should thoroughly study in order to determine if we can actually implement it.

[Second unidentified speaker] I think that this is a good way to help Cubans, but they should act in the same way toward the Haitians.

[Third unidentified speaker] I think that we should lend them a hand. We must show our solidarity with them as long as the measures that were adopted regarding their stay in Panama are adhered to.

[Fourth unidentified speaker] We know that Cuba is facing a very difficult situation. We should not oppose what our president is doing if the government made this decision along with the United States. He knows what he is doing, I think, and the people should support our policies toward fraternal countries facing very difficult situations. [end recording]

Foreign Minister: Central America Supports Decision To Receive Cubans

PA0609030094 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2348 GMT 5 Sep 94

[From the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] Upon his return from a meeting in Costa Rica, Panamanian Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo stated that the Central American governments had supported the Republic of Panama's decision to receive approximately 10,000 Cubans.

The Central American foreign ministers met in San Jose, Costa Rica today, to study Panama's position regarding its integration into the region. Foreign Minister Lewis Galindo attended the meeting and emphatically stated Panama's position in this respect.

The occasion was opportune for several foreign ministers in the area to express their support to Panama regarding its decision to accept Cuban refugees.

[Begin recording] [Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo] The Costa Rican position is very clear. We will receive refugees when they are claimed by relatives who live in Costa Rica or are Costa Ricans of Cuban origin. We do not have the capacity or adequate installations to receive a large number of refugees as Panama is able to do.

[Guatemala Foreign Minister Gladys Ruiz de Vielman] The Guatemalan Government's position regarding receiving Cuban citizens in Central America is that we support and respect the humanitarian aid that several Central American countries are able to give the Cubans. This is a very important action of fraternity and solidarity, and it merits our support. [end recording]

Panamanian Foreign Minister Lewis Galindo arrived in Panama a few minutes ago and made the following statements to the press at the Paitilla Airport upon his arrival.

[Begin recording] [Lewis Galindo] They have supported Panama's decision to aid the Cubans and have stated that Panama's action is very noble.

[Unidentified correspondent] Let us go back to a national issue. It is after 1800 and still no one knows when the Cubans are going to arrive. Do you have any information in this respect?

[Lewis Galindo] No, I do not have any information. I have been at a closed-door meeting in Costa Rica all day. [end recording]

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Argentina

Cavallo Announces Government Spending Cutbacks

PY0109191094 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1107 GMT 1 Sep 94

[Text] Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo has announced that all government openings, both civilian and military, have been frozen.

Cavallo has also anticipated that the privatization of the Mint, of the National Post Office and Telegraph Enterprise, of airports, of the Bahia Blanca Petrochemical Complex, and of the National Commission for Atomic Energy (CNEA) will have been concluded by the end of the year.

The freezing of openings is provided for in a decree signed by President Carlos Menem on the afternoon of 31 August and later read by Cavallo during a speech delivered at the closing ceremony of the 10th Convention of Private Banks sponsored by ADEBA [Association of Argentine Banks].

The economy minister explained that this decision stemmed from the need to reduce government spending for the remainder of this year and 1995. He explained that the 1995 budget will be submitted to Congress for approval on 15 September.

The announcement, which came as quite a surprise to the scores of businessmen and bankers who were attending the convention, provided the crowning touch to the meeting. In the opinion of some of those present at the ceremony, it also served to show that "President Menem continues to put forth concrete initiatives to deepen the market economy plan now in force."

Politicians from other countries, like former U.S. President George Bush, Chilean Finance Minister Enrique Aninat, and Spanish politician Jose Maria Aznar, among others, also participated in the convention. They all confirmed their support for the Argentine economic plan and sang the praises of the Menem administration.

The head of state, who was not expected at the closing ceremony, said that it was difficult to implement a reform scheme "without demagoguery or populism." He asserted that "despite the problems confronting us, the country continues to grow."

Menem, who addressed the convention shortly after Bush—from whom he received unconditional support in his capacity as "both an Argentine and world leader"—was also lavish in praising the United States.

In closing his brief speech, Menem underlined that "if there is a country that showed solidarity with us and contributed to putting Argentina on its feet again, it was precisely the United States."

With regard to the decree announced by Cavallo, it states that as of 1 September, all temporary and permanent openings in the Civil Service, the Armed Forces, and security services available to 31 August are frozen.

By 5 September, government agencies will have to inform the Economy Ministry about the amount of money this measure has enabled them to save in their personnel budget so that these savings may be considered when drafting the 1995 budget.

The decree also establishes that as of 1 September, there will be a 10-percent cut in the still undisbursed resources earmarked for consumer goods and nonpersonal services.

Cavallo said that "this will represent a considerable saving of money for the remainder of 1994." He announced that the system to control public agencies' purchases and spending will be enhanced through the establishment of a national office for control and purchases, which will come under the jurisdiction of the Economy Ministry.

The decree further stipulates that the public works financed by the Regional Development Fund—the completion of which is still pending—will be transferred to the National Public Works Plan. This will enable "the conclusion of these works with the utmost economy and efficiency of resources."

Cavallo took the opportunity to demand that governors comply with the state reform provisions, particularly the Federal Fiscal Pact.

To that effect, he announced the cutback in social security contributions paid by employers in the areas of retail businesses and services is dependent on compliance with the Fiscal Pact, which includes, among other things, privatization of provincial banks and deregulation and elimination or reduction of distortive taxes.

Cavallo explained his warnings by stating that "while the federal government has deregulated and reduced taxes, some provinces have increased them or created new ones, and have authorized municipalities to do so."

"Governors will have to eliminate distortive taxes and have privatization completed by 31 December 1994, or conclude some pending cases before 30 June 1995," he said.

According to Cavallo, if this is done, the government will have had a balanced budget for four years in a row and "will be able to increase its productivity."

With regard to the immediate future, Cavallo stated that it was necessary for "the spirit of good will prevalent in the recently held Constituent Assembly to permeate Congress now" so as to enable the enactment of pending laws.

Among the most salient ones, he mentioned labor reform, the deregulation of the construction industry,

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the Bankruptcy Act, and the reform of professional fees." [quotation marks as received]

Further on Cutbacks

PY0109194094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1506 GMT 1 Sep 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 1 Sep (EFE)—On 1 September, Argentine President Carlos Menem implemented several draconian measures geared to saving $2 billion in public spending for the remainder of the year.

The austerity measures include the privatization of all nuclear power plants in the Argentine territory, including that of Atucha-I, the first one to be established in Latin America.

The privatization of nuclear power stations will entail a major restructuring of the National Commission for Atomic Energy (CNEA), a state-owned enterprise established 42 years ago that took Argentina to the leading-edge of technological development in the nuclear field.

The Argentine Treasury will thus be able to save some $1 billion, which is the amount that had been appropriated for concluding the construction of the Atucha-II nuclear power plant, the third station for Argentina, which will now have to be concluded by private companies.

The Argentine authorities estimate that they will collect some $600 million with the privatization of the nuclear power plants, which produce 17 percent of all the electricity consumed in the country.

A presidential decree, moreover, freezes, as of 1 September, some 4,000 openings in the public administration, the Armed Forces, and security services.

It likewise provides for a 10-percent cutback in government expenditures on the purchase of consumer goods and services for the remainder of the year.

Menem adopted these measures four months prior to the expiration of the $3-billion standby agreement signed with the IMF in 1991.

According to press reports published on 1 September, the Argentine Government "squanders" approximately $5 billion annually in the purchase of goods, the hiring of services, and social security schemes.

The Menem administration is, moreover, waging a campaign against tax evasion in order to balance the Treasury accounts, something Argentina must strictly observe to comply with the IMF agreement.

The Economy Ministry will establish a national office for purchases and hiring services so as to implement the appropriate regulations and controls.

With a view to reducing unnecessary spending, the ministries and secretariats under the executive branch have been authorized to modify their administrative structures.

On the evening of 31 August, Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo said that "these measures will enable us to save some $2 billion for the remainder of 1994 and an even greater amount in 1995."

Di Tella on Egypt's AMIA-Related Offer, ICPD Meeting

PY0609035994 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2132 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 5 Sep (NA)—On 5 September, Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella disclosed that the Egyptian Government had offered "the cooperation of the intelligence services" in the inquest into the attack perpetrated on the AMIA [Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association] headquarters.

Di Tella said: "I have held a talk with Dr. 'Amr Mahmud Musa—who is an old acquaintance of mine, and who is Egypt's foreign minister—about the attack on the AMIA headquarters, and he has offered me his country's collaboration using the intelligence services."

Di Tella, speaking on Radio Continental, also referred to the UN Conference on Population and Development, which he addressed on 5 September to expound the Argentine Government's stance on these issues.

Asked about whether Argentina had voiced its opposition to abortion as a mechanism for population control and family planning, Di Tella replied that "it could not be otherwise."

"The bottom line here is not so much abortion, because no country proposes it as a birth control method, but rather education," he said.

With regard to the two attacks perpetrated in Argentina, Di Tella explained that his Egyptian counterpart, 'Amr Mahmud Musa, had given him "a very detailed explanation of the nuances that characterize the Hizballah."

Commenting on his conversation with the Egyptian foreign minister, Di Tella stated that "a specific country is not necessarily behind the Hizballah."

In conclusion, Di Tella said that Musa had been "very optimistic" about the clearing up of the AMIA case and about the peace process in the Middle East.

Bolivia

Integration Under Secretary on Trade With Cuba

PY0109203394 Cochabamba LOS TIEMPOS in Spanish 20 Aug 94 p A2

[Text] La Paz—Foreign Ministry Integration Under Secretary Victor Rico told LOS TIEMPOS that Bolivia imports "Rum" from Cuba worth approximately $1 million per year but exports absolutely nothing to that Caribbean island.

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In view of this, Bolivia will try to even the trade balance with Cuba, and this will be the main subject of the bilateral talks that will be held on 25 August with Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, who will pay an official working visit to Bolivia.

According to Rico, there is a possibility that Bolivia will sign a commercial agreement with Cuba. For this reason government and private enterprise representatives have been meeting to draft a list of Bolivian products that could be exported to Cuba.

The aforementioned agreement will be reached within the framework of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), as well as the Cuban people's interest in this agreement, said Rico.

The under secretary also explained that "up to now, trade with Cuba has been nonexistent, but we import rum worth approximatly $1 million per year."

Despite the geographic distance between Bolivia and Cuba, in the short term, and in small quantities, Bolivia wants to export goods to Cuba and, at the same time, there is a possibility of importing Cuban manufactured goods and medicines.

Cuba's Robaina 'in Search of Support' Against U.S. Blockade

PY0209140394 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 21 Aug 94 p 3

[Commentary by Jose Gramunt de Moragas, S.J.: "Referendum in Cuba"]

[Text] Fidel Castro is strongly allergic to free elections. All the good advice given him by presidents of friendly countries to democratize the political system has sunk in the Caribbean Sea. It is useless! Nobody is going to change the "commander" or tell him what to do.

But the fact is that a very peculiar referndum is taking place in Cuba. Nobody has called this referendum, there are no ballot boxes or ballot slips, but the number of constituents grows every day. We are talking about the referendum of the "raft people" who take to the sea, with all the risks it entails, in search of a better situation than the one on the island. It is no longer foreign heads of state who suggest a political change. It is the Cuban people themselves who vote "yes" for freedom and, consequently, "no" for the current system that has been in force on the island for the past 35 years.

Strangely enough, Castro does not mind the shame the fleeing of his fellow countrymen from the island causes him. This is probably due to the fact that the fewer the number of people to feed, the further scarce essential goods can be stretched. Or the reason may be the fact that the increasing number of Cubans who seek shelter in the United States is bothering the North Americans, so much so that Washington has eliminated the privilege whereby those Cubans would automatically be considered political refugees. The number of Cubans who arrive is so great that it is creating serious migration problems for the United States.

In the meantime, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina has started a tour of several Latin American countries, including Bolivia, in search of support for a campaign against the U.S. "blockade" against Cuba. Previously I referred to the uselessness of that "blockade." In the first place, this is because it is not as radical as the Havana Government describes it: Many countries in the world freely trade with Cuba. In the second place, the Cubans themselves sooner or later will openly voice their disagreement with the Castro regime.

The serious shortages the island is enduring are not so much because of the blockade but rather due to the lack of resources Cuba has for use in trading with other countries. Castro's policy has always relied on the generous USSR aide and never bothered about having exportable production, except for sugar, nickel, and a few other items. Neither did the communist system encourage the Cubans to stockpile at least the essential foodstuffs.

The "raft people" are an example of the Cuban people's free political determination. All the system needs to do is open the doors for democratic guarantees and freedom of press and assembly for the island to start a process of change without the need for U.S. pressure. Of course the U.S. Government fears that if it changes its attitude, it will lose the votes of millions of Cubans living in exile.

On one hand, Castro continues to use the excuse of the blockade as an international propaganda tool to justify his "indispensable" permanence in power. This is why Robaina is coming: To obtain Bolivia's support for U.S. lifting of its measures of economic pressure. Well, let them do what they please and let us see what happens. Let us see if Castro tackles the challenge of granting full freedom to all his people. Not even the most naive person believes the story that the Cuban foreign minister is coming to Bolivia to sign trade agreements.

Brazil

Highlights of Ricupero's Comments on Issues

PY0509202294 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2218 GMT 3 Sep 94

["Main" passages of "conversation" between Finance Minister Rubens Ricupero and Rede Globo reporter Carlos Monforte on 1 September; place not given]

[Text] [Monforte] Are the banks concerned about this business of the savings passbooks?

[Ricupero] The compulsory? We will have to implement it; it will act as a deterrent. There will be a drop, even if it has to be forced. Aren't people saying that I was only going to adopt hard measures after the elections? That's

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what they were saying. That there would be a real 1 and real 2 plans. But this would not be a popular measure, would it? They (the banks) have been maneuvering.... They have been mentioning CDB's [Bank Deposit Certificates] and other things like that. I am not saying anything, but if you want to know more, ask for details about it at the Central Bank and you will find out that this sort of thing exists.

[Monforte] And what about the IPC-r [Consumer Price Index-real]. Will this index continue to be in use or will it be replaced?

[Ricupero] Look, now, in September it will disappear. I will not comment on it because I do not want to announce it yet, but I already know that in the first week it has decreased quite considerably.

[Monforte] Therefore, you must report it.

[Ricupero] No; because we do not report on the inflation rate before the established moment, I cannot report on it yet. Otherwise, the PT [Workers Party] people will say that we.... [changes thought] Maybe next week I will, but the thing is that the inflation rate will really drop.

[Monforte] Why did the IPC-r add up to such an aberration? Why was it so high?

[Ricupero] They have committed a dreadful methodological mistake. They included the overall increase in rents at once, including the rents that had not increased before June. Pastore gave an interview in Sao Paulo showing this, didn't he? Nevertheless, the situation is difficult because if I modified anything, they would say that I was being manipulative. There is also some people's thesis that the IBGE [Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics] is a PT den, right? (The IBGE is responsible for releasing the IPC-r.)

[Monforte] What is a den?

[Ricupero] The IBGE. I do not know whether it is true, but some people are convinced of that. People say that it is not, so on and so forth, but people here are a little naive (laughs). People in the economic area. I do not exclude the hypothesis of having had something different.... But consider the following: This is the only index that totaled so much. I am rather suspect in saying that, right?

[Monforte] But [the maneuver] did not help in anything, did it? It even increased....

[Ricupero, interrupting] We are not being broadcast, are we?

[Technician] The line is dead.

[Monforte] Why did it happen? Is it being transmitted by telephone?

[Ricupero] Ah, by phone.

[Monforte] How should it be corrected?

[Ricupero] We are doing that (laughs). What do you think this compulsory business is?

[Monforte] Is this the correction being made?

[Ricupero] It is a way of breaking the process. There were signs that the economy was warming up, warming up in general.

[Monforte] Because the inflation rate went up again, right?

[Ricupero] And there was that suspicion. You know, it is a rather preventive measure. The idea is a little as I said: It is a deterrent similar to when bus drivers step on the brakes to rearrange the position of passengers who are standing up. Like when bus drivers say: Attention, everybody, I am going to step on the brakes to rearrange your positions, to better distribute space. There were signs, were there not? The IPC-r business, the salary readjustment, people wanting to stage strikes. There had to be a blow. I will give the situation another blow with the imports business. It is not a joke. I will take firm measures.

[Monforte] Is it only car imports, or is it all sorts of imports?

[Ricupero] Frankly, I am tired of being so reserved. From my point of view the decision is excellent.

[Monforte] To what sort of imports does it specially refer?

[Ricupero] All sorts.

[Monforte] Will all taxes be reduced? Will imports be entirely free?

[Ricupero] I can't say that imports will be entirely free, but most consumption articles will be freely imported. We will do it in a big way.

[Monforte] Consumption goods, right? Things such as TV sets, refrigerators, all these things?

[Ricupero] All that you have been mentioning. All of it. Durable consumer goods. That's the only way to ensure that there will be no shortages, because these guys.... [changes thought] We are dealing with bandits, you know. They are all bandits.

[Monforte] Brazilian businessmen are tough people.

[Ricupero] I will not say it, but you know. I always tell that story: One does not threaten but.... Do you know that story about the mafia? One does not threaten.... That sort of thing is really good. Do you know that story about the Mexican driver?

[Monforte] No.

[Ricupero] A guy takes a roundabout at rush hour going the wrong way. The guy in the helicopter who is directing a radio program says: "Watch out, there's a crazy guy going the wrong way!" When the Mexican driver hears

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that, he says: "Not only one crazy guy; there are thousands of crazy guys!" (laughs)

[Monforte] But it is important to mention this business about the decrease in the IPC-r.

[Ricupero] But I still do not have.... [changes thought], I still cannot. I will promise you the following: If I succeed in convincing some persons, I will give you exclusive news on Monday [5 September]. I will give you an exclusive on Monday, but I must discuss it with some people or they will kill me. There is a complete corporation of economists. It's a complicated business. Then they will say: What's the matter, first you forbade it, when the figures were bad, now that they are good.... [changes thought] Well, as a matter of fact that is true. I have no scruples. Positive things we use, bad things we hide, right?

[Monforte] I am curious about one thing. You had been jabbing the PSDB [Brazilian Social Democracy Party] with some light blows....

[Ricupero, interrupting] But I stopped, didn't I? It was all due to Franco (Gustavo Franco, the Central Bank's international affairs director). If I hadn't done that , he would have been dismissed. Every time there is one of those changes, to balance things, because the Electoral Court began to look into things.... I don't know what.... It was then that I gave him a jab in order to demonstrate absolute impartiality. This is what I told ISTOE. Every time I had one of those exchanges, I made a jab. If I had a PMDB declaration, I would also jab it. If it was the PT.... (giggles) The problem is that my advisers are from the PSDB; therefore; I only make jabs at the PSDB. I should have someone from the PMDB. I must do that, because you see, Carlos, if I do not do it, they will question my impartiality. Now, everything is calm, right? You have observed; everything has now calmed down. No one is talking about the matter any more. You have to kill those kinds of things at once. The only way that I can prove that I have become distanced from the PSDB is to criticize the PSDB.

[Monforte] That is true....

(An adviser of the minister interrupts to ask a question about the technical problem that is occurring)

[Monforte] ...it will be recorded in Sao Paulo.... We have the link [preceding word in English].... Because it is going in live. We now have the link [preceding word in English]. It is then recorded in Sao Paulo. But, the problem is here (pointing with his right hand to the electronic apparatus that he uses in his ear). Lilian (Witte Fibe) needs to speak and then we are.... (now talking to the minister) Isn't that gasoline deal being made in a bit of a hurry? Can one speak about prices coming down?

[Ricupero] It was alright to create some.... You know that everyone is talking about the IPC-r....

[Monforte] (Interrupts to speak with the lady technician) I am not hearing properly, but I am hearing. There is a lot of noise.

[Ricupero] I can hardly hear.

[Monforte] The minister can hardly hear.

[Ricupero] (Returning to the topic of the gasoline) As I was saying, that deal clears up the air somewhat.... You know, I do those things mostly by instinct. Sometimes I create confusion. I have no doubts; that country is not rational.

[Monforte] Not one little bit; is it not the same?

[Ricupero] I gave Petrobras a scare. I took advantage of the opportunity to make it firm up in order to face demands. There are several advantages that I would like to use, and if I could, I would.

[Technician, interposing] Tell him what he is saying is being done for the "Jornal Nacional" program.

[Unidentified speaker, interposing] All is going well, looking good. I will use it afterward.

[Monforte] When answering, he should also give the short answers that "Jornal Nacional" wants so that I can ask more questions, is that right? This is going well, you have come in twice.

[Ricupero] I am here. They can carry a program with me when I leave the government, a debate (laughs).

(Monforte now talks with the technicians)

[Ricupero] If you want to, it can be on the "Fantastico" program over the weekend. I could record the feature. I am at your service for anything you want. Who is looking after things; is it Alexandre [Garcia—a Rede Globo commentator]?

[Monforte] No. it is Nereide from the "Fantastico" program. I can even speak with her.

[Ricupero] You can speak with her because I am at your service. I will be here all weekend. I believe this is a good thing, my dear friend, because it is because of the IPC-r deal that I want to stay. That is why I decided to remain on the air all the time. Thus, I can speak for a maximum time.

(The transmission goes off the air for some seconds)

[Ricupero] No, I am not concerned about that.... no....

[Monforte] It is Rome itself?

[Ricupero] For me it would be better, so then I could rest. Listen, just between ourselves, and this is going to sound conceited, he needs me more than I need him. Because when I finish....

[Monforte] Today, I have no doubts....

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[Ricupero, interrupting] I would not say this to anyone else. When all that is over, and if everything comes out all right, he is going to have problems explaining why he does not invite me.

[Monforte] What?

[Ricupero] Explaining why he does not invite me (laughs). You know, I do not say that, but numerous people who have written to me and try to see me say that they are going to vote for him for that reason. In addition, he knows that, right? I am his greatest obtainer of votes today. For example: I am a godsend for Rede Globo because instead of giving him overt support, it puts me on the air and no one can say anything. Now the PT is beginning.... [changes thought] but it cannot because I am on the air all the time and no one can say anything about it, isn't that true? That did not happen the other time, that is a solution, shall we say an indirect one.

[Monforte] I have no doubt that many people are going to vote for him because....

[Ricupero] I listen to a lot of people...who would not vote for him due to the PFL [Liberal Front Party]; they are going to vote because of me.

[Monforte] (Pauses again to discuss the audio quality, which is not good, with the technicians) It is not bad.... it is not working. There is a lot of noise, which makes it difficult to hear. The noise has gone, but I cannot hear anything. The noise has returned.

[Technician, interposing] It is being transmitted via satellite, all right? The parabolic antenna will catch anyone who is talking.

[Monforte] All right. It is full of noise.

[Technician] Everyone can hear.

[Ricupero] Then they have done it (he looks at Monforte and the two of them laugh).

[Monforte] These are the horrors of our business. Hurry up a little with that, for the love of God. The noise is returning.

[Ricupero] I am going to sign some papers, all right? Because I have to look at some things.... I have many things....

[Monforte] Yes, go ahead and speak. Everything is all right, we are in the know here (laughter). All right then, good bye. Look here, no more talking because the parabolic antenna is receiving the conversation. There is a lot of noise....

[Ricupero] You should have said so before, I have been talking for more than 30 minutes....

'Text' of Ricupero Resignation Statement

PY0609031794 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2027 GMT 4 Sep 94

["Text" of statement read by former Finance Minister Rubens Ricupero on 4 September]

[Text] Sao Paulo, 4 Sep (AE)—"I submitted my resignation to President Itamar Franco on the afternoon of 3 September. I am well aware that I owe an explanation to the Brazilians who honored me with their trust.

"On the evening of 1 September, a totally private conversation I was having with reporter Carlos Monforte was broadcast without my being aware of it or my having authorized it. I was the victim of an electronic mistake.

"I was awaiting the moment to start the 25th meeting of that day, which marked two months since the real had been implemented. I was totally worn out. While I was waiting for the television station to solve some technical problems, I had an informal talk with an old acquaintance to whom I am linked by family ties. It goes without saying that during such talks the accuracy of concepts discussed or the restraint in the presentation of arguments are not always prevalent.

"It is also public knowledge that, over the past two months, I have been devoting myself heart and soul to that part of my duties that I deemed to be the most important, namely, the implementation of the Real Plan and the task of informing and orienting citizens with regard to the economic changes. In this veritable marathon, which led me to travel the length and breadth of the country and to give numerous conferences, speeches, and interviews, I was probably the victim of a process in which—besides physical weariness—the excessive exposure to the media and the people's affection highly tickled my vanity.

"I assume total responsibility for that moment of weakness that led me to say things that did not reflect what I think or feel. I do not even recognize myself in some of the comments I made. I may have been too rash in my comments, but I am sure that, in the discharging of my duties as finance minister, I have done nothing wrong.

"Without trying to justify what is unjustifiable, I reject the parts of the conversation which hint at the fact that I am too full of myself or of my own importance with regard to my post at the head of the Finance Ministry. This has never been my usual behavior or part of my rules of conduct.

"This notwithstanding, I have learned a lesson in humility from what has happened. Contrary to what the support evinced by the people may suggest, I am a human being like anybody else, with the same limitations and shortcomings, with moments of weakness.

"Precisely on account of this, I do not hesitate to make my apologies when I make a mistake. I apologize now for what I said and to whoever I may have disappointed with my comments. I also apologize for the sweeping generalization I made with regard to Brazilian entrepreneurs and individual behaviors that I had already condemned.

"I cannot but explain some passages of the talk that is public property now. In light of the confused way with

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which my words were registered—bits of conversation here and there—they have given rise to hasty interpretations and accusations.

"I am well aware that I shocked many when I said that I would have no scruples about showing what is good and withholding what is bad. What was I talking about? I was simply referring to the suitability of disclosing the Consumer Price Index-real [CPI-r] every week. Leaving aside a purely technical way of thinking, I would not hesitate to disclose weekly indexes if this were to help keep prices down. I was thoroughly convinced that if I did not tell citizens that the trend of inflation was definitely moving downward, as all the other indicators showed, we would be just stoking the furnace of inflation through preventive markups on food and goods on the basis of an inflation that never existed. I was thinking about some companies against which charges were made at the Finance Ministry for trying to raise their prices before the August CPI-r was officially released.

"Even considering that the first meaning of the word 'scruples' is 'hesitation on grounds of conscience,' without having any moral connotation, I understand that the sentence in which I used that word—which was quoted out of context and without the explanation given by that backdrop—should have caused surprise and consternation.

"I have never ever lied to the people. I have never ever withheld information. I have never ever manipulated or let others manipulate price indexes. I have always behaved according to the ethical and religious principles that have at every moment guided my private and public life.

"When I made the presumptuous comment that 'the government needs me much more than him,' I was replying to a question about my possible participation in the next administration and not in the current one. I want to make a point of changing the false impression that I gave on account of that passage because I highly value the respect and loyalty I feel for President Itamar Franco."

"My personal comments about the possible effects of the Real Plan in the forthcoming elections and the coverage of the plan in the media were only superficial impressions. They are not underpinned by any solid evidence that may justify them. Still, they led to an unavoidable association between the candidacy of my predecessor at the Finance Ministry and the Real Plan, since Senator Fernando Henrique Cardoso was the mastermind of the plan and the one who put the stabilization program into motion.

"My weaknesses cannot damage what is the most important thing at this juncture, namely, the success of the Real Plan. This is why I tendered my resignation. This is the contribution I can make to give continuity to the plan and the greatest proof of my loyalty to the people who trusted in me.

"During the five months I headed the Finance Ministry, I tried, within the bounds of what was possible, to contribute to the implementation of the Real Plan, which is a sound and balanced plan capable of bringing forth stability and of ending the terrible injustice inflation imposes on the most destitute.

"I deemed that my most important mission was to explain the economic plan and provide ample information to humble people, those who had always been left out in the great attempted changes to our economy.

"I never failed to tell the truth or to be sincere, since they were the guarantee of the only instrument I had at my disposal to keep battling on, namely, credibility. Many times I was criticized for having talked in public time and again, for having openly expressed my feelings and opinions, for having disclosed ideas without following the established procedure. Nevertheless, I was never criticized for having given false hope or having created improper expectations.

"I have worked unstintingly and without sparing myself—countless hours of overtime, many of which were done at the expense of my own family. Over the weekends in which I could rest, I traveled throughout the country to take to states and cities—which finance ministers had seldom or ever visited—information about the changes in the economy and a word of confidence in the Real Plan and in citizens' power.

"I tried to change the Finance Ministry into a tool to mobilize people's support for the defense of consumers' rights and the fight against inflation because I believed from the very beginning that we could do nothing without the participation of the Brazilian people, and especially of housewives, pensioners, students, and workers, who finally began to have real reasons for trusting in the future of the country, in which they could have a say through their own efforts.

"I call upon everybody to continue participating in this struggle, which is all of Brazil's struggle, and to never give up; to continue to be committed to the Real Plan with the same civic spirit that is changing Brazil for the better; and to give my successor the same support that encouraged me and made me feel proud of what I was doing.

"The Real Plan is a work of the whole nation and has its continuity assured by the success it has already achieved, by the quality and ability of the economic team—which helped to draft it and is helping to implement it—and by the Franco administration's commitment to economic stability as a condition for development and social justice.

"If I achieved some success in the discharging of my duties, and especially in the task of informing and guiding the people, it was thanks to the support of the media, and especially of reporters who backed me up

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from the very beginning. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of them and to pay tribute to their professionalism.

"To conclude, I would like to express some loving words for my family—my wife Marisa and my children Cristina, Isabel, Bernardo, and Mariana. They are the reason for everything I do, for everything in which I believe. They give me the strength that has always supported me and supports me now, at this time in which I can now go back to them and share with them these lessons life has given me and satisfaction with regard to what I could accomplish.

"When I took office at the Finance Ministry, I asked God to give me the strength of His grace, something which I have always had over all these months. Now that I leave this Ministry and return to my life as a professor, I want to quote, as the best conclusion of my transit through public life, two passages from the Bible. The first, which sums up everything I feel at this hour, is from the Book of Job, when this great sufferer says: 'The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the Lord.' The second is the same Psalm I recited when I was installed as minister—Psalm 32, which I transcribe here in full:

'Happy the people whose God is the Lord

And the nation that He chose as His heritage.

From high on heaven the Lord sees and observes

He contemplates from His dwelling place

And looks at all those who inhabit the earth.

He shaped the heart of each one

And takes an interest in all their actions.

The Lord thwarts the plans of the nations

And the projects the peoples intend to undertake

But the projects of the Lord last forever

The thoughts He cherishes in His heart

Will last from generation to generation.

We hope in the Lord with confidence

Because He is our help and protection.

Our heart rejoices in the Lord,

His holy name is our only hope.

Pour forth your grace, Oh Lord, on us

Just as we trust in you.'"

Appointment of New Finance Minister Announced

PA0409230094 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2131 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] Brasilia, 4 Sep (NOTIMEX)—The Brazilian Government announced today the appointment of Ciro Gomes, governor of the northern state of Ceara, as the new finance minister, replacing Rubens Ricupero who resigned.

Gomes, 36, will meet with President Itamar Franco in Brasilia on 5 September, the Planalto Palace Press Secretariat announced without specifying the date when the new minister will assume his post.

Ricupero formalized his resignation today after an accidental leak of a confidential statement he made to a reporter. He virtually recognized in that statement the government's support for the ruling party candidate for president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

Gomes is the youngest governor in the country, and his good works in Ceara State have earned him popular support and prestige according to analysts.

[Madrid EFE in Spanish at 2110 GMT on 4 September reports: "New Brazilian Finance Minister Ciro Gomes said today he will not alter the economic stabilization plan, which has contributed to reducing inflation."]

Franco Explains Gomes Appointment

PY0509203894 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 4 Sep 94

[Text] Ceara Governor Ciro Gomes, a member of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party [PSDB], is the new Brazilian finance minister. Journalist Alexandre Garcia has more details in the following live report from Brasilia.

[Begin recording] When he appointed Fernando Henrique Cardoso first and then Rubens Ricupero as finance minister, President Franco surprised everyone by making his personal opinion prevail in those appointments. He has done the same thing this time. Yesterday, while his closest advisers were suggesting the most obvious names, Franco picked up the phone and called Ceara Governor Ciro Gomes to offer him the post of finance minister.

At 1515 today, Franco and Gomes talked on the phone and made the final arrangements. The official announcement was made at 1600.

A few moments ago, the president explained the reasons for Gomes' appointment. He said he considers Gomes to be a man with the qualities needed to continue Ricupero's work because he has an in-depth knowledge of the economic plan, that Gomes is a good man, a good communicator, and a representative man, and above all, an excellent administrator, proof of which is the high rate of popular approval he enjoys.

President Franco notes, however, that the Real Plan does not belong to any minister, or to the president. He made it clear that the Real Plan now belongs to the nation. [end recording]

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Gomes Vows Not To Change Economic Team

PY0509211494 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 1600 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Ciro Gomes, the governor of Ceara State and the finance minister-designate, arrived in Brasilia early this morning.

Gomes met with President Itamar Franco, from whom he received two basic recommendations; that is, to assign priority to the economic plan and to ensure that the goals of the Real Plan are fulfilled.

The finance minister-designate early today began to prepare to take charge of his new post. Gomes had breakfast with the Central Bank president and with the Finance Ministry executive secretary. Later, he met with President Franco to receive the first instructions as to how to discharge his duties as leader of the economic team. The recommendations included an agenda of topics that Gomes will have to emphasize such as salaries, consumption, economic indexes, monetary policy, exchange rate, and Mercosur [Common Market of the South].

Late this morning, Gomes met with outgoing Finance Minister Rubens Ricupero to learn about the work of the economic team. Gomes will spend all day today meeting with members of the economic team. He announced that today he will submit a letter to his party—the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, PSDB—leadership to ask for a leave of absence.

According to advisers, Gomes is scheduled to return tonight to Ceara State to formally step down as governor of Ceara State. Gomes stated that he will not make changes in the economic team and that his main priority will be to give continuity to the Real Plan.

[Begin Gomes recording] I want to ask all Brazilians, especially politicians, to let me enjoy that right to which every individual is entitled; that is, a time of tolerance during which my performance can be assessed based on my actions. I will show them that I will be a minister of Brazil, not of my party. [end recording]

Gomes did not want to leave his post as governor to run for an almost certain Senate seat. He wanted to complete his term as governor. Yet, President Franco's offer has changed everything.

At 36, Gomes will become the youngest minister to serve on President Franco's cabinet.

Gomes was a boy scout and a sportscaster. He is also a lawyer. He has had a lightning political career. He was elected Ceara state deputy in 1982 before becoming mayor of Fortaleza. Then, he became governor of Ceara State, the youngest one in the country.

As Ceara governor, Gomes sought to reduce social problems. Through the work of more than 5,000 health workers, he managed to reduce the infant mortality rate in the state and earned the UN recognition for this achievement. Yet, Gomes' major achievement has been the Trabalhador Channel, which was built in three months, to deal with the worst drought in Fortaleza during the past 50 years. The channel is 100 km long and was built in the savanna region, thus guaranteeing food supply to the capital.

Gomes is leaving the government of Ceara State with a more than 60 percent approval rate and the feat of having balanced the state accounts.

Colombia

Gaviria's Last Diplomatic Appointments Noted

PA0209220994 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 1 Sep 94

[Report by Azucena Lievano from the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] Between 1 and 6 August, one day before leaving the presidency, Cesar Gaviria Trujillo signed 306 government decrees, including 38 appointments abroad.

The "24 Hours Newscast" has learned that former President Gaviria signed 207 decrees in a single day and that the embassy and consulate positions in several foreign countries were practically filled on 3 August.

At the OAS, where he is to assume the secretary general's post, the former president appointed officials and created new positions. He appointed Jorge Lopez Adella as minister counsel, Juan Carlos Iragorri as an adviser, Carmen Lucia de la Pava as second secretary, Carlos Eduardo Jaramillo as plenipotentiary minister, and Ramon Cote to the new first secretary position that has a monthly salary of $3,841.

According to records in the presidential archives, out of the 38 appointments, 27 were people who are not career diplomats. On 1 August, with the signature of Minister Noemi Sanin, seven appointments were made in the UK, Geneva, France, the Netherlands, and the United Nations and four new positions were created in the Cuban embassy. On 3 August, 24 appointments were signed, for example, Gustavo Petro in Belgium, Eduardo Chavez as secretary of our embassy in France, and Vera Grave as first secretary in Spain.

According to leading members of the government, the situation has tied President Samper's hands in appointing personnel at our embassies. He has only appointed the ambassadors to the OAS, Washington, the United Nations, and London. There are no vacancies in any embassy, and the government is waiting for several diplomats to submit their resignations and is expected to revoke other appointments made by the previous government.

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President Announces Central Intelligence Office

PA0209221294 Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 25 Aug 94 p 11A

[Text] Colombian President Ernesto Samper Pizano, in a speech made while swearing in new DAS [Administrative Department of Security] Director Ramiro Bejarano Guzman, announced that his administration will start an offensive against crime, subversion, impunity, and drug trafficking, which are still the country's main enemies.

"If we continue to only defend ourselves from these threats, we will continue to be deluged by violence and unable to fulfill the wish of most fellow citizens who want a country in which one can live and work in peace," Samper said.

The president said that in order to achieve this, one needs to develop intelligence systems to prevent crimes, to dismantle terrorist actions before they take place, to reduce the number of guerrilla ambushes, to fight corruption, to defeat impunity and allow Colombians to regain confidence in the justice system, and to punish unmercifully all levels of administrative corruption.

After expressing his assurance that the new DAS director will be successful in his post thanks to his high professional and personal qualifications, his dynamic character, unimpeachable honesty, and good judgment, Samper said:

"Our fundamental pledge is to create a huge intelligence center to efficiently coordinate operations that state agencies carry out on different fronts, so that they always operate in the same direction and follow a common thread."

Samper also said that this coordination seeks "and end to setting traps among the various agencies, which only serves to favor the violent."

"With this new intelligence center, which will be organized today, we will present the government's belated fight against violence. With the best and most honest men and women and with modern equipment, we shall guarantee the security and tranquillity of Colombians."

Police Arrest Alleged Bolivian Drug Trafficker

PA0209194594 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1819 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 2 Sep (EFE)—Colombian police in Santa Fe de Bogota arrested today Antonio Percy Roca Ali, considered the "number one" Bolivian drug trafficker, in an operation in which another alleged international drug trafficker Colombian Henry Serrano Echeverry was arrested.

Percy Roca Ali is accused of shipping at least 2 tons of cocaine from his country to the United States, Europe, and Japan. He is considered the "heir" to the empire of Jorge Roca Suarez and Roberto Suarez Gomez, "the coca king" of Bolivia.

Suarez is charged by the authorities of his country and of the United States with these crimes and is considered a Cali Cartel "associate."

Bolivian Defense Secretary Mario Solis confirmed in La Paz Percy Roca is the brother of Jorge Roca, who was arrested in Los Angeles last year and who "inherited" his businesses.

Antonio Percy Roca's arrest, which is part of an operation dubbed "New Daybreak," took place in a northern Santa Fe de Bogota area, stated sources from the Administrative Department of Security (DAS), the Colombian secret police.

The Alien Section of the Colombian Prosecutor General's Office has received an extradition request from U.S. authorities.

The Colombian Foreign Ministry is waiting, however, for an extradition request from Bolivian authorities.

Soldiers Kill FARC's Major Weapons Trafficker

PA0209221394 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 26 Aug 94 p 6-A

[Text] The military is convinced that the man who confronted them on Wednesday morning in Acandi (Choco) and who was killed by soldiers was the main gun-running contact for the FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia].

Military sources said that in the past five years alone, Jose Adonay Yepes Ramirez reportedly brought into Colombia from Central America more than 3,000 weapons, most of them AK-47's.

Authorities in Uraba never doubted his cleverness. They even said that on 6 August 1993 a Panamanian police helicopter spotted a vessel, the "Capricornio," and arrested Yepes Ramirez in Panamanian waters.

Even though Panama had serious evidence that Yepes Ramirez was using the country to get weapons to the Colombian guerrilla, he was released less than 20 days later for lack of evidence and he returned to Colombia.

Army reports state that 40-year-old Yepes, who was born in Turbo, Antioquia, was for the past eight years the main source of weapons and ammunition for the guerrillas.

His suppliers were in El Salvador and Nicaragua. The sources added that all the suppliers were demobilized rebels.

For the past year, since his arrest in Panama, the authorities had specific information on Yepes' activities. Yepes was known as "the bomb."

Likewise, three months ago, the Uraba Special District Attorney's Office issued a warrant for his arrest. The warrant number was 004. He was charged with the

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alleged crimes of trafficking and trading with weapons, terrorism, and association in terrorist crimes.

The official reports state that Yepes' contacts with the FARC was through Front No. 5, the biggest front operating in Uraba, and Front No. 30.

The military also knew that Yepes would eventually travel to Panama to receive a shipment of weapons. At the time of his death, "la bomba" had several receipts of purchases of electronic equipment made in Panama and the "Capricornio" inspection documents.

But, despite his known ability to avoid the authorities, at 0500 on Wednesday morning, in a lonely path in La Poza, Acandi, Yepes was finally caught.

Reorganization Within National Police Realized

PA0309174694 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Sep 94

[Report by Alvaro Ayala from the "24 Hours Newscast"]

[Text] The reorganization of the National Police, which is scheduled to take place in one week, was suddenly implemented this afternoon. Normal changes within the corps were followed by the downfall of two high-ranking generals for reasons that were not routine.

Even though Defense Minister Fernando Botero Zea said that the two ousted generals had distinguished themselves during the years they served in the National Police and that their replacement is simply a result of various measures aimed at strengthening the reorganization process, it is no secret the controversial matter of the narcocassettes had a great deal to do with this issue.

Nevertheless, the defense minister denies this statement, because investigators have failed to find any evidence, though certain generals still harbor doubts. Consequently, relations between high-ranking officers in the last two months were not the best. There was a deep internal division:

[Begin Botero recording] We have considered that existing work relations were not the best for the development of the National Police. [end recording]

Consequently, the National Police leadership is as follows now: General Octavio Vargas Silva was affirmed in the corps directorate; Assistant Director Fabio Campos Silva, who was also commander of the Cali Search Bloc, was replaced by the current attache to Washington, General Guillermo Leon Diettes Perez. The diplomatic post will be occupied by General Rosso Jose Serrano, who maintains good relations with U.S. authorities. Serrano's post will be occupied by General Luis Enrique Montenegro, commander of the Santa Fe de Bogota Metropolitan Police.

The post of assistant DIJIN [Judicial Police and Investigations Directorate] director, one of the most important posts, which was held by General Jairo Rodriguez, is now occupied by Colonel Hugo Martinez, who eliminated Pablo Escobar when he was in charge of the Medellin Search Bloc.

An important source from the government of President Ernesto Samper told the "24 Hours Newscast" the true reasons for the downfall of the assistant police director and the DIJIN director. We will quote our source in context:

Gen. Fabio Campos Silva, assistant police director, was brought down by his ambition to quickly reach the National Police Directorate; this ambition led to constant friction with Director General Vargas Silva and ended in an open confrontation. High-ranking government officials gave their full support to Gen. Vargas Silva today by removing Campos Silva.

According to the same source, DIJIN Director Gen. Jairo Antonio Rodriguez was brought down by his lack of determination. Likewise, it was necessary to promote three star colonels who were waiting in line: Teodoro Campo, Alfredo Salgado Mendez, and Hugo Martinez Poveda, the man behind the intelligence work to catch Pablo Escobar.

Constant disputes between the National Police director and the assistant director regarding the struggle against the Cali Cartel also became a veritable nightmare for high-ranking government officials, and matters came to a head 15 days ago when Gen. Vargas Silva discovered Campos Silva had tapped his telephones.

Vargas denied today a personal confrontation resulted in the ouster of Assistant Director Fabio Campos Silva:

[Begin recording] [Alvaro Ayala] Gen. Vargas, the question everyone is asking today is why were two generals removed?

[Vargas] The defense minister has said this procedure is part of the dynamics of the corps; therefore, this is part of the process carried out by the corps, where changes must be made and a reorganization must be carried out.

[Ayala] Was there a division within the National Police?

[Vargas] It was necessary to make changes among the generals too, because those who took courses for a general promotion have already completed their courses. Approximately 15 officers with the rank of colonel had completed their courses, and they had to be appointed to the post of department commander.

[Ayala] These two generals had no ties with the narcocassettes or corruption?

[Vargas] No. I want to be clear about this point. There are no ties; there is no investigation involving them. The National Police and the Attorney General's Office have conducted the appropriate investigations, and it was determined with absolute certainty these officers or anyone inside the corps had no ties with the cassettes. [end recording]

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Ecuador

Government To Reject 'Unnatural' Birth Control at ICPD

PA0509030194 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1924 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Quito, 2 Sep (EFE)—According to Antonio Arregui, secretary of the Ecuadoran Bishops Conference, Ecuador will reject the recommendation by developed countries of "unnatural" methods such as abortion to control population growth at the International Conference on Population and Development [ICPD], to be held in Cairo.

The bishop told EFE today the Catholic Church is "pleased" with the position adopted by the Ecuadoran Government to reject abortion as a method of birth control.

"We do not reject this proposal due to ideological bias but because it constitutes the beginning of a radical, moral debasement; if an innocent child is killed with impunity, anything can happen," argued Arregui, Quito's assistant bishop.

Arregui also asked for a change in the world's economic system that "enables less developed countries to live in decent and fair conditions."

"We ask for the implementation of methods that facilitate a fair distribution of the planet's resources, as well as the elimination of the current economic system of inequality, which has plunged a large part of the world into poverty," he said.

Arregui recommended that the representatives of the 162 countries to the ICPD, which begins on 5 September, analyze various methods so "all of the world's inhabitants can have access to the feast of life, because they are all God's children."

President's Rejection of Abortion Noted

PA0609040494 Paris AFP in Spanish 2335 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Quito, 5 Sep (AFP)—Right-wing Ecuadoran President Sixto Duran-Ballen has rejected abortion as a family planning method for controlling births, the secretary general for planning of the state's National Development Council (Conade) pointed out today.

In a document drafted by Conade for the UN Conference on Population and Development [ICPD] that is taking place in Cairo, the president underscores that the Constitution of the republic states that family planning in Ecuador calls for responsible fatherhood and appropriate education to promote the family as an institution and guarantees the right of parents to have the number of children that they are able to rear and educate.

The Duran-Ballen administration thus rules out abortion as a method of birth control because it involves more than limiting family growth.

Government Charges Manipulation of Results

PA0309131894 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2301 GMT 30 Aug 94

[Text] Quito, 30 Aug (EFE)—The Ecuadoran Government charged today opposition sectors and certain Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) magistrates are manipulating the results of a plebiscite on constitutional issues that was held on 28 August so as to "undermine its legitimacy."

A communique issued by the State Communications National Secretariat [Secretaria Nacional de Comunicacion del Estado—Senacom] assured those sectors are trying to promote "a massive annulment of votes and the use of other methods to undermine a will as expressed through the elections."

Senacom has denounced "the intention of certain TSE members to magnify voter absenteeism through a voters registry which has not been purged and which includes hundreds of thousands of citizens who have died or left the country."

"It is estimated a little more than 3.2 million people voted in the past two elections, and this figure must be taken into account when making any estimate on abstention," the official communique added in reference to the 1992 presidential election and the May 1994 parliamentarian election.

The TSE, which has admitted the voters registry needs further purging, has stated there are more than 4.2 million voters, and TSE President Camilo Ponce said on 29 August abstention was between 40-45 percent.

Ponce added initial figures indicate 65 percent of the voters failed to answer the plebiscite's questions if void and blank voters are added.

The government proposed a plebiscite to initiate a complex process of constitutional reforms, and the people who did vote favored the position of Conservative Ecuadoran President Sixto Duran-Ballen according to unofficial figures.

Congress will have to pass a draft reform presented by the president in less than 100 days should those figures be confirmed once the official results are announced in mid-September.

Duran-Ballen will call another plebiscite to allow the people to directly decide about the constitutional reforms should parliament reject that draft partially or totally or should it fail to pass it within 100 days.

According to data supplied by the government, on 28 August Ecuadoreans supported measures such as the reelection of the president and other elected officials, the granting of double nationality to emigres, and the elimination of a deputy's power to handle state budget funds.

Duran-Ballen complained on 29 August about the TSE's slowness in recounting the plebiscite votes.

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"I hope the TSE will not help reinforce a belief that has already been voiced by certain segments of the population: that the intent is to manipulate the results," the president added.

Preliminary Results Show Reforms Approved

PA0209194894 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1729 GMT 2 Sep 94

[Text] Quito, 2 Sep (EFE)—The Supreme Electoral Tribunal reported today that according to the first preliminary results of the plebiscite held on Sunday, a majority of the Ecuadoran voters approved the government's proposals for constitutional reforms.

The data corresponds to 13 of the 21 Ecuadoran provinces, among which are those with the largest number of voters, therefore a change in the results is not expected once the final numbers are known.

The main question asked voters if a 100-day deadline should be fixed for Congress to process the bills drafted by the government to reform the Constitution. Figures indicate that 40 percent of the voters said "yes" while 28 percent said "no."

According to the results of the first question, if Congress rejects the government reform project either in part or in full, and if it is not processed in 100 days, President Sixto Duran-Ballen, a conservative, could call another plebiscite for the people to decide the issue directly.

The voters also supported by a close margin the possibility of reelection for the office of president of the Republic and for other public posts, currently prohibited, with 36 percent in favor and 33 percent against.

An official proposal to take the management of state budget funds out of deputies' hands was supported by 59 percent, while 10 percent opposed.

On the possibility of allowing persons who do not belong to any party to participate in all the elections as candidates, something that is currently prohibited, 46 percent voted in favor and 24 percent against.

Likewise, the possibility of having dual nationality was approved by 53 percent of the voters, while 19 percent voted against.

The results of the plebiscite will be taken into account by a "commission of notables" appointed by Duran-Ballen to draw up the constitutional reform draft bill that will be sent to Congress, probably at the end of the month.

Venezuela

Minister Laments UN Mandate To Invade Haiti

PA0609045894 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2205 GMT 5 Sep 94

[Text] Caracas, 5 Sep (EFE)—Venezuelan Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Burelli said today that with an invasion of Haiti "everything would be lost instead of won" and deplored that this measure cannot be countered because it is a UN mandate.

Burelli said the negotiating initiative presented by Venezuela, after the UN Security Council approved the invasion, managed to appease warmongering attitudes.

"After the council's decision, the invasion was next in line, but Venezuela's initiative modestly appealed to UN consciences to reflect and make a final effort," Burelli stated.

Venezuela proposed that a delegation of Latin American foreign ministers travel to Port-au-Prince to convince military authorities to leave power. The proposal never materialized. The United Nations decided to partially carry out the proposal by sending its representatives in search of the same objective in an action that did not succeed.

Burelli said that after the UN failure, possibilities of a peaceful solution to the problem are minimal because "the United States has the authorization to invade Haiti in its pocket."

Foreign Minister on Haiti, Cuba

PA0209234994 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 28 Aug 94 p D-1

[Report on interview with Venezuelan Foreign Affairs Minister Miguel Angel Burelli Rivas by Jose Vicente Ponce, during a forum sponsored by EL NACIONAL, attended by Argenis Martinez, editor-in-chief; Cenovia Casas, chief of international and diplomatic news; William Becerra, chief of political news; and Elias Garcia Nava, chief of economic news, in Caracas; date not given]

[Text]

Venezuela and Haiti

[EL NACIONAL] How do you think the UN initiative toward Haiti will evolve?

[Burelli] Well. And we see it as well because the United Nations took from Venezuela's hands what had been our peaceful and humanitarian attempt to prevent what the Security Council had authorized (the armed intervention). Therefore, if the same organization that authorized the measure believes that world reaction to our last-minute attitude is the reason, they are welcome to it and we give way to them.

[EL NACIONAL] But why has Venezuela not been invited to the last meeting organized by UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali? We read that the secretary general met with three friends (of Haiti) countries, but not with Venezuela, because it did not support Resolution 940. Where did we stand in those negotiations?

[Burelli] We asked ourselves the same question, and we let the secretary general know that we were surprised that

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despite the fact that we had been so consistent, so decidedly part of that group, and having as we have the perception of the Caribbean people regarding everything that happens in the Basin, the secretary general never consulted the group. Now they have summoned the others and explained that we had not backed Resolution 940. In other words, that is a Security Council decision, and we are not currently members of that body. Anyway, we were apparently excluded for not having backed Resolution 940.

[EL NACIONAL] To clear up any doubts, Mr. Foreign Minister, why don't you explain chronologically everything to do with the Venezuelan initiative?

[Burelli] There are no mysteries. It was an extraordinarily successful initiative—a success we had never imagined—an initiative which we began with modesty, with Venezuela's friendly and pacifist spirit, which had its repercussion in 73 of the most diverse countries—countries that we had least expected under this circumstances—and we were about to get a mission to Haiti together. Initially it was believed that the mission would be comprised of ambassadors from countries that subscribed to the UN commitment. Following a suggestion by one of the Friends, we raised the rank of mission members to that of foreign ministers. But before going we had to learn what the two extremes of the crisis thought; to do otherwise would have been senseless. It would be like accepting what the newspapers had said, that there was no planning. We wanted to hear the military and President Aristide. The approach to the military, which was very difficult because we have no embassy accredited there, was accomplished; we found the same degree of intransigence that is already known, and they proposed coming to talk to us.

[EL NACIONAL] Was this the contact made by Ambassador Peinado Barrios...?

[Burelli] Peinado did it and others did so too....

[EL NACIONAL] Like who?

[Burelli] Other people who do not have an official rank. We were in no situation to accept the military officers' request to talk in that mission because the only thing that had to be discussed was: "When were they leaving and where did they want to go" so we could help them find asylum. There was nothing more for us to discuss with them. With Mr. Aristide, we wanted to ask him, in the name of the Haitian people, to give us his assurances that he would abide by the amnesty law he promised to implement in the Governor's Island Agreement. We also have to tell him that he has to organize things so as to have a country where people can coexist; appoint a prime minister who, as much as possible, all Haitians will find trustworthy; and implement a true democratization process in the country. In essence, those were the points on which we wanted to reach agreements with both sides. But as it turned out, the military officers want to talk to me, and I have nothing to say to them. The UN secretary general's initiative to send a representative at the last minute emerged at the very time that we were searching for other ways to communicate. We got the impression that, because of the fact that we were being accused of interfering with the UN Security Council's resolution and of defying the U.S. State Department—something that is not exactly true, since the U.S. Government never said a word to us, nor were we pressured, or demands made. I never spoke to the U.S. ambassador in Caracas about this until we decided to hand the mission over to the United Nations.

[EL NACIONAL] Foreign Minister, a diplomat in Port-au-Prince said that he did not think it was fair that, and I quote him, "for the Venezuelans to come in now that the ball is well-positioned and kick a penalty goal." Don't you think this is rather just an international game of egotism?

[Burelli] It could be. I don't want to offend anyone but, having had so much success, we were not interested in winning a point but rather in fulfilling the mission, regardless of who did it. The United Nations? We hope they accomplish it. Our only interest is for Haiti not to be invaded and that force not be used to injure Latin America's deepest feelings. Now, there were quite a few principles at stake in this initiative, which has sparked so much interest: Latin America's peaceful nature and the principle of nonintervention. We cannot give this up. It is the backbone of American law and hemispheric policy. It also has a profound humanitarian sentiment as the problem is not the invasion but the occupation and the consequences it will entail.

[EL NACIONAL] You present the initiative as successful and promising an agreement. Why was it weakened by the international media? The press agencies doubted its success, especially with other countries making counterproposals. It never caught on...it was not strong enough.

[Burelli] Do take into account that many reporters tried to put us up against the United Nations. We had to clarify the point that we were not against the United Nations and that we are obligated to respect the decisions made by the organization because we are one of its members. Even Brazilian President Itamar Franco, believing that the support of his foreign minister was not enough, asked that we invite him to join the initiative. He abstained in the Security Council because we had already made contacts for the initiative. Mexico asked us to raise the level of the mission from ambassadors to foreign ministers. Bolivia and Uruguay expressed their desire to help. In Central America, we thought we had Nicaragua or Costa Rica.... The thing is that for a mission to be formed we had to know that there was basis for a discussion, not mediation or negotiation, but a discussion of the two parties involved in the crisis. We had the plane ready to fly and meet with the foreign ministers three, four, or five hours before leaving. We wanted to get our heads together and appoint a spokesperson so as not to have different voices. We would go to

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Port-au-Prince and then to Washington and back to Port-au-Prince and Washington as many times as needed to accomplish the mission.

[EL NACIONAL] Without going through the State Department?

[Burelli] Why, if this is a bid made in good faith?

[EL NACIONAL] Wasn't this the element missing from the Venezuelan idea?

[Burelli] No. If we believe we have to ask any other country for permission.... We do not need it. And nobody made us feel that way, nor do I think that matter should be submitted to the United States to ask for its permission regarding something that involves U.S. humanitarianism because many people are going to die in Haiti.... Now, the situation has evolved in another direction, because at that moment we did not have the Cuban situation that has overlapped with the Haitian issue.

[EL NACIONAL] You mentioned regarding the discussion that you have found intransigence?

[Burelli] Aristide, at the first meeting—and there were no others because the UN events came up—just said the Governor's Island Agreement had to be discussed. We already had the first response by Haiti, from the military, and just then, before we could continue the talks with the military and Aristide, the UN secretary general decided to send a mission. We stopped right there.

[EL NACIONAL] In other words, the military wanted to come to Caracas to hold talks.

[Burelli] To continue the talks as if there were time for it and as if there were a topic other than their immediate departure. We guaranteed to them that they would come out alive and find safe haven in another country. We talked on the telephone one day, and I said to him: I have nothing more to say to you unless you tell me when the military is leaving.

[EL NACIONAL] Couldn't another solution be sought?

[Burelli] It is there already. We took the initiative in the United Nations. That does not prevent us, for example, from relaying a document that circulated as the blueprint by Haiti's democratic lawmakers for an agreement, cutting Aristide's term short. We relayed it and are ready for it for the sake of the goal sought. For the time being, however, we want no part of the mission that we started.

Help to Cuba

[EL NACIONAL] You said the Cuban topic is overlapping with the Haitian affair. For the past two months, we have seen Venezuela adopting a very unique position on asylum, before this wave of people came out. What is Venezuela going to do now about U.S. President Bill Clinton's request to accept refugees?

[Burelli] This is the first time I will speak about this. Since 1959, Venezuela has been accepting Cubans. I believe, I do not know if I am right, we have the second largest community of Cubans in the world, after the United States....

[EL NACIONAL] We have 30,000, according to figures from Democratic Platforms.

[Burelli] I imagine the figure must be high. Perhaps no two peoples in Latin America are more similar than the Venezuelan and Cuban peoples. The bond of affection between the two countries has never been cut, nor is it decreasing or waning. The fate of the Cuban people is a very important matter; it is a little like our fate. We would have wanted a profound solution to resolve once and for all the drama of that country now that thousands of boat people are risking their lives. As for a request by the United States, which different countries oppose, to create safe havens to house the refugees, it does not seem to me to be appropriate to have Cubans here as refugees in a nearby camp. I would prefer to propose a formula so that Cubans living here help their relatives who want to leave and so improve the situation of those Cubans. This would not be done without limits but based on a quota, so that the Cubans will come with the support of their relatives here, who by the way are almost all hard workers, as our contribution to resolving this drama that must be temporary. The Cuban situation must be treated in a bilateral manner soon, and the solution of that country must be found among Cubans.

[EL NACIONAL] That OAS proposal: what is it specifically? Where does it lead? What can Venezuela do within the OAS to alleviate this drama?

[Burelli] The OAS will issue a statement, stipulating the principles that govern the American community as established in the OAS Charter. These are the principles of nonintervention, the strengthening and expansion of democracy—to which we are committed through the National Constitution—and respect for human rights. In this sense, almost all the leaders of the Americas have personally approached President Fidel Castro to ask him to take a step forward. The community has rules; we are going to follow them: it wants changes to be made with Castro, not against him. Cubans must resolve their own situation among themselves; Cuba has suffered a great deal. In that statement, the Cuban Government should also be encouraged to state in some way its wish to be a full member of the family that awaits it.

[EL NACIONAL] Within the Cuban political process, how do you define this moment for Castro? What can be expected?

[Burelli] This matter can have implications for all nations; it is upsetting that a conflict of this nature exists and prolongs the Cuban nation's suffering and exposes the lives of innumerable people. Castro himself said there have been more than 200,000 rafters so far this year.

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[EL NACIONAL] Could this be considered as a plebiscite on Castro, for example....

[Burelli] I do not see it this way because it is something that is developing, that is in motion. What is regrettable is that there is no agreement between the two nations. If the United States deals with Vietnam, with Korea, and with China, why doesn't it speak to Cuba in concrete terms and finally reach an appropriate solution, instead of prolonging this drama indefinitely? I believe the United States has a position that must be respected: no more refugees, thereby interrupting a long-held policy. Meanwhile, the Cubans' situation forces them to emigrate. In the name of humanity, one must ask the two parties to sit down at the negotiating table.

[EL NACIONAL] Is Venezuela considering taking some kind of initiative?

[Burelli] This initiative is being taken by the OAS, starting with a statement which we already mentioned. Venezuela participates in the committee that is drawing this up. This would give the OAS the chance to act.

[EL NACIONAL] On the idea that Cubans here can claim their relatives, will the consulate in Havana issue all the required visas?

[Burelli] These would be issued to those claimed by their relatives in Venezuela. The embassy would have to be reinforced. There will not be an unlimited number; rather it will be a manageable number of relatives who in turn have someone here to receive them, an organized household.

[EL NACIONAL] But that plan was not considered for the Haitian refugees. Are these cases any different?

[Burelli] They are not different, but there is an organized Cuban community in Venezuela. Therefore, we do not expect this group of Cuban refugees to be another burden. To the contrary, they may turn out to be as hardworking as those who worked miracles in Florida. They built favorable conditions in Florida through their own work. They can thrive here with the same effort. I reiterate: The number of refugees that will be accepted is limited.

[EL NACIONAL] It seems that the Caribbean Basin is in flames.

[Burelli] Not so much anymore. The situation was much more critical during the colonial era; it was the area of transit for all treasures going to Spain, and back then the British had the pirate Morgan attacking them, while the French and the Dutch also wanted their share....

[EL NACIONAL] Speaking of captains, rumors say that Captain Perez has many friends in the Caribbean.

[Burelli] Many people are indebted to former President Carlos Andres Perez. It must be acknowledged that he promoted many causes. He was a very dynamic man and made many friends, which is very commendable. There was an incident with the Caribbean countries, but it was overcome, and we do not talk about that anymore.

[EL NACIONAL] We were speaking of helping Cubans, but what can we do to help a Venezuelan—"Carlos"—who is detained in France?

[Burelli] We, on behalf of Venezuela, and if Carlos has not renounced his citizenship, must help him. Our consul in Paris and the embassy, which is now handling consular matters, are available to ensure that he is given due process and treated in keeping with human rights stipulations and to guarantee that he receives proper assistance during the entire process.

[EL NACIONAL] Has there been any contact with the government, the embassy, or have you seen him?

[Burelli] No contacts have been made with the government, but the embassy has taken some actions, and as soon as he is allowed visits, representatives will visit him. As you know, the procedures there are similar to ours, and authorities are currently preparing summary proceedings.

[EL NACIONAL] Has a formal request been filed?

[Burelli] That is not necessary. A consul's main responsibility is to look after the integral security of his fellow countrymen. The consul does not judge anyone's conduct and must protect his fellow countrymen under any circumstances.

[EL NACIONAL] It is being said that President Caldera is traveling almost as much as President Perez.

[Burelli] President Perez traveled quite often; there is no comparison. Caldera is at the other extreme: he did not even go to Chile to attend the inauguration of the son of his best friend, Eduardo Frei, because it was too far and the country's problems were too serious. He spent only the time that was strictly necessary at the Cartagena summit. He spent only two hours at the ceremony commemorating the formation of the Association of Caribbean States. He will go to Panama on 1 September in the morning and return in the afternoon. He is going to Brazil because he will receive the great distinction of presiding with Itamar Franco over the parades commemorating the Brazilian national holiday. This is a great honor, which shows our excellent relations with Brazil. From Brazil, where he will make a one-day official visit, he will continue to Rio de Janeiro to attend the Rio Group Summit. He will spend one and a half days in Rio. He will return to Venezuela and will visit the United Nations because it is a must—at least, a custom no one breaks—to address the General Assembly on his plans. This trip will take place between 29 and 30 September. He will go and return shortly. Aside from that, we would rather have visitors. For instance, Colombian President Ernesto Samper will come in October; it will be both an official and a working visit. Members of his cabinet, particularly those handling social policy, will accompany him.

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Ministers Approve Changes in Exchange System

PA0209173094 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 1 Sep 94

[Report by Cecilia Pachano from the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] The Council of Ministers has approved partial changes in the decree establishing the foreign exchange system in order to expedite the sale of foreign exchange.

Although he recognized that not all loopholes inherent in this type of system will be closed with the reforms approved by the cabinet on 31 August, Luis Raul Matos Azocar, president of the Exchange Administration Board, insisted on expediting the process of approving applications. According to him, the Board's authority to demand deposits or other types of guarantees and the increase in the power to authorize the repatriation of capital and those profits made by investing in stock exchanges and subject to the capital market are among the modifications approved.

Matos also said these reforms will increase to 10 percent the amount of capital companies can retain abroad to guarantee their operations, while establishing the possibility of these companies opening an account abroad, accounts that will be consolidated quarterly to the Central Bank of Venezuela to ensure that importers will be able to use these funds to acquire raw materials. These funds will be included in the Business Revolving Fund [Fondo Rotatorio Empresarial].

Finally, the decentralized public administration debt is recognized, and a special system to award foreign exchange to scientific, cultural, and sport activities is created.

[Begin Matos recording] All of these reforms will let us [words indistinct] of the system. In view of the current situation, the Board has approved more than $400 million in requests. Meanwhile, the Technical Exchange Office surpassed the 500 petitions processed and analyzed. We believe we will achieve the announced objective of having a flexible and clear foreign exchange control system shortly, while we will also accomplish the goal of protecting our main reserves. [end recording]

Credit cards and the recognition of the foreign private debt are among the issues pending. As for the private debts, Matos reported that only seven companies have registered these so far.

Council of Ministers Approves Economic Plan

PA0409030894 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 4 Sep 94

[From the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] On 12 September, the executive branch will present to the country its macroeconomic stabilization plan, Guillermo Alvarez Bajares, director of the Central Information Office, announced on 3 September, as he left a special Council of Ministers meeting at La Casona Presidential Residence. He also announced the entire plan was approved.

[Begin Alvarez Bajares recording] The full plan was unanimously approved by the Council of Ministers. The final version, which was presented today by Dr. Corrales [Werner Corrales, minister of the Central Office of Coordination, CORDIPLAN], was approved by all of the ministers. Everyone agrees that this plan prepared by the technical team of Dr. Corrales and CORDIPLAN meets the current demands and needs of the country. [end recording]

Nevertheless, Alvarez Bajares did not give further details of the plan, because he said Finance Minister Julio Sosa Rodriguez and the economic team will release the details after President Rafael Caldera returns from his trip to Brazil. Alvarez Bajares, however, rejected statements made by Henry Ramos Allup, chief of Democratic Action's legislative wing, who said the macroeconomic plan was similar to the one of former Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez. In response to this, Alvarez Bajares said this plan takes into consideration the social concerns of the situation—something the former president's plan did not do.

In the end, Alvarez Bajares said CORDIPLAN Minister Werner Corrales will meet next week with various sectors of the country, such as FEDECAMARAS [Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry], political parties, and the churches.

Planning Minister Expects Economic Plan To Work

PA0409160094 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 31 Aug 94

[From the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] Coordination and Planning Minister Werner Corrales believes that by next year, the macroeconomic stabilization plan will begin to yield positive results. Corrales denied certain news reports that according to the macroeconomic plan, economic growth in 1995 will be zero.

[Begin Corrales recording] The source of that information is not ours. On this I can be very, very categorical. That information is not accurate, and it does not pertain to the stabilization program. I must insist on the fact that this program belongs to the country. [end recording]

Corrales also pointed out that he cannot provide further information on the plan, because President Caldera must make such announcements.

To conclude, Corrales asked the news media not to link the macroeconomic plan to him, because the program has been created by the state for the nation.

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Bank Superintendent on Liquidating Failed Banks

PA0209221194 Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 26 Aug 94 Section 2 p 1

[Report by Giuliana Chiappe]

[Text] The decision by the Financial Emergency Board to liquidate all commercial banks in which the government has intervened has not been changed yet. Only a proposal guaranteeing to the state the recovery of the resources it has invested could change what seems inexorable.

The officials in charge of the intervention in the eight financial institutions in question—La Guaira, Amazonas, Bancor, Construction, Maracaibo, Metropolitano-Confianzas, Fiveca, and Barinas-Popular banks—had until yesterday to submit their proposals, which will determine the fate of each of these financial institutions.

Bank Superintendent Tesalio Cadenas, coordinator of the groups in charge of the intervention, said: The political decision by the Financial Emergency Board was to liquidate the commercial banks, adding: we would only agree to changes if a more advisable proposal is submitted.

The case of Banco La Guaira could be the exception. According to the official in charge of its intervention, Aquiles Rojas, foreign banks are interested in purchasing the bank; they even sent Jose Berrocal, an officer of the James D. Wolfensohn Investment Bank, on a survey mission, as reported by EL UNIVERSAL on 24 August.

Cardenas admitted he was aware of the existence of these potential U.S. and Japanese buyers, pointing out that the government has received no formal proposals from any foreign investor to purchase any of the banks in which the government has intervened or the state-owned Banco de Venezuela.

If there are no bids to purchase, the liquidations will begin as the government wraps up its evaluation of the financial groups to determine if an institution might be saved, as could be the case with the mortgage banks.

[EL UNIVERSAL] Will the intervening officials also be the liquidators?

[Cadenas] Yes, that's possible. This decision will not be made by the Bank Superintendency but by the Deposit Guarantee and Banking Protection Fund [Fogade], which will be in charge of the liquidation. However, it is possible the intervening officials will be the liquidators, but you are already aware of their functions.

The essential issue to define in the financial recovery or shutdown of the banks in which the government has intervened is the possibility of refunding state financial subsidies. These subsidies amount to 800 billion bolivares, paid with idle funds that the Central Bank of Venezuela [BCV] delivered to Fogade, which in turn would use these funds to aid those institutions that lack liquidity and solvency.

The Banco de Maracaibo will also be liquidated, perhaps partially, not completely. The government is trying to maintain the regional branches this institution has in Zulia State. An internal merger, followed by an external merger, with the Banco Popular is being studied.

Cardenas pointed out: We must study this institution's problems, because there is a possibility of a merger. The goal is to replace its regional branches, but this is a special case, because the bank has 136 branches that have very special characteristics.

The Financial Emergency Board met yesterday at BCV headquarters to evaluate the development of the banks on which special measures were imposed during the third phase of the crisis. Cardenas underscored the process is "more or less good."

These three banks are the Banco de Venezuela, which the state purchased at one bolivar per share with the commitment that it would assume the bank's losses that, according to the latest estimates, are close to 60 billion [currency not specified], and Banco Consolidado and Banco Progreso, aided through a subordinate loan based on a trust fund in which the owners deposited their properties or other assets excluded from the balance sheets. There are no reports on this process.

Another point the Financial Emergency Board is currently evaluating, "in paper and without making any decision," according to Cardenas, is the possibility that the state might acquire the credit portfolios owned by institutions with liquidity problems—portfolios that are falling behind in payments, are insolvent, or are being litigated—so as to prevent these negative factors from affecting the intitutions' operations. Chile used this plan during the 1980's crisis. Once the institution recovers a satisfactory level of liquidity, it would have to repurchase these low-grade loans.

Aeropostal Suspends Operations

PA0209125694 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 1 Sep 94

[From the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] The most important news, the story in today's headlines that's giving everyone plenty to talk about is the closing of Venezuela's Aeropostal Airlines, whose operations were suspended. We are waiting for the Venezuelan Investment Fund to decide the fate of the old Aeropostal Airlines, which operated for 64 years until its Board of Directors announced yesterday the suspension of operations due to the airline's financial crisis. Aeropostal losses amount to 6.5 billion bolivares.

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President Cited on Bankruptcy

PA0509183794 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 2 Sep 94

[From the "Union Radio News" newscast—passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] Aeropostal President Efrain Rosenfeld has told "Union Radio News" that all employees will receive their wages and vacation pay. He added that it is practically impossible for the airline to work as it did before.

[Rosenfeld] "It is nearly impossible for Aeropostal Airline to resume work under its current conditions. It would be irresponsible on our part to try to continue along these same lines. It would require a multimillion-dollar investment and the state cannot continue with such expenses."

Rosenfeld explained that all other airlines are accepting Aeropostal tickets in an act of cooperation and solidarity.

[Rosenfeld] "The media can confirm this. In the nation's airports, all Aeropostal passengers are using other airlines. Other airlines are accepting our tickets, because I promised to honor the payment of the tickets. Yesterday, American Airlines agreed to accept them. United Airlines is already accepting them for international flights. Therefore, the cooperation I have been receiving from other airlines is total and absolute. We are very pleased and are showing that air transportation must be managed by private individuals who know how to run this type of business."

However, Rosenfeld stressed that the efforts to resolve the problem caused by Aeropostal's closure are continuing.

Meanwhile, Aeropostal workers marched down the main streets of Vargas Municipality for the second straight day. The workers staged a peaceful march near Simon Bolivar Airport. They were accompanied by councilmen and union members in Vargas Municipality.

Mario Caires, president of the National Pilots Association and leader of the march, referred to the monopoly that could be created if Aeropostal's routes are sold.

[Caires] "The airlines that will take Aeropostal's routes are Avensa and Servivensa. We are asking the VIASA [Venezuelan Airlines] pilots union, since VIASA is still partly a government-owned enterprise, if VIASA will take the routes. We want the routes reopened so that we can have Aeropostal's routes back. If they are given to Avensa and Servivensa, the monopoly will be total, the fares will be increased, the employees' real salary will go down, and there will be a lack of safety."

Caires emphasized that Aeropostal workers, together with a private investor, can run the airline. He said the claim of millions of dollars in losses used by Aeropostal's Board of Directors to declare bankruptcy is false.

Meanwhile, Transportation and Communications Minister Ciro Zaa reported that American Airlines is interested in covering Aeropostal's international routes. Zaa said that agreements will be reached with commercial airlines in the next few hours to cover Aeropostal's international and national routes.

[Unidentified reporter] "What airlines are involved in this....

[Zaa, interrupting] "American Airlines will cooperate actively with regard to the international routes.

[Reporter] "How about the domestic routes?

[Zaa] "There will be a meeting in the morning." [words indistinct]

According to Zaa, the executive branch is interested in resolving the problem because passengers are being left stranded without transportation as a result of Aeropostal's bankruptcy.

In addition, Cruz Manuel Ugueto, president of Avensa's national union, announced that other airline unions are reportedly expressing their solidarity with Aeropostal workers. He explained that these unions are those of Vargas Municipality, the National Airlines Union, the Air Traffic Comptrollers Union, and the Union of Workers of Airport Autonomous Institutes, all of which are reportedly backing the actions taken by Aeropostal workers and would be willing to join them to carry out more forceful actions.

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